

John and the Isle of Patmos

I. The Isle of Patmos

A Description of Patmos.—Patmos is a small island in the Aegean Sea, one of twelve known collectively as the Dodecanese, also, at times, the Sporades. It is about mi. (c. 90 km.) southwest of the ruins of Ephesus, which are near the present Asia Minor coastal town of Kuşadası (see *The Journeys of Paul*).

In shape, Patmos is something like a horseshoe or crescent, with both ends pointing toward the mainland of Asia Minor. It is less than 10 mi. long by 6 mi. wide (16 by 10 km.). It covers about 12 sq. mi. (31 sq. km.) of land. It is so small as to be quite insignificant except for the fact that it is mentioned in the first chapter of Revelation. Its highest point, about 800 ft. (244 m.) above the sea, is called Mt. Saint Elias. See illustrations facing p. 736.

Once Patmos had three harbors, though today only one, Scala, is in use. This is a sheltered port where ships anchor in the harbor instead of tying up at a wharf. Small boats come out to the ships and take passengers and cargo ashore. Once ashore, passengers find two hotels waiting to accommodate them, and a few taverns and cafes. The 2,500 inhabitants, Greeks, are hospitable folk.

The island is mountainous. Much of it is covered with rocks, and the barren land is broken and rough. Patmos appears to be of volcanic origin, and though some terraced gardens have been made, the produce is insufficient. Food has to be brought in from nearby islands. Wells and springs provide a water supply for daily use and make unnecessary the importation of water, though some of the neighboring islands are not so fortunate.

Although the land is not productive it would seem that a few palm trees once grew there, because the island was earlier called *Palmosa*. Today there are a few pine, olive, and fruit trees. Some of the inhabitants engage in sponge fishing, the principal commercial enterprise. Some raise grapes, cereals, and vegetables. The island does support a number of goats, by which means some milk and dairy products are provided. The women do a little knitting.

There are limited opportunities for employment, but many of the inhabitants have relatives in the United States who send checks back home to help provide for their kinsmen. The Isle of Patmos once belonged to Turkey, then to Italy, and now to Greece. The people chafed under the Turks, and rejoiced when the Italians liberated them. But after the second world war the island was transferred to Greece.

Patmos is a lonely island. There are a few stores, which are sturdily built of stone in the old-fashioned style; also a small number of potteries. Picturesque flat-roofed houses, gleaming with whitewash, line the few, irregular streets on the hillsides, from which the climber can gain a delightful view of the sea and many islands.

When the main monastery was built in the 11th century the plan was to allow no women on the island. But this rule was disregarded when fishermen and others came there to live. At one time it was said that only three hundred men lived there and that the women outnumbered them twenty to one. It has been estimated that there are about 300 chapels on Patmos; some of these are extremely small and of limited use. Once it was said that Patmos was “full of monks and pirates”! The fierce pirates are gone, but the peaceful monks of the Greek Orthodox Church remain.

The Patmos Monastery of St. John.—In 1088 the Byzantine emperor Alexius Comnenus made a written deed, or decree, called the Golden Bull, giving Patmos, for all time, to Christodulus and those who should succeed him. They were to hold it free from all taxes. Some are convinced that the Christian monastery was built on the spot where an Artemis temple had anciently stood. Ross published the finding of an inscription, mutilated though it was, indicating that the ancient goddess was the Scythian or Tauric Artemis. The embalmed body of Christodulus was shown in a small side room off the monastery chapel.

The strong towers of the monastery walls confirm the belief that the monastery was built primarily to serve as a safely protected residence for the monks of St. John, and also as a refuge for other inhabitants of the islands, against pirates and similar intruders. It is stated that Christodulus took workmen from the island of Cos to help build the monastery, which is a memorial to the writer of the Apocalypse.

There is one modern road leading up the steep ascent from the port of Scala, past the apocalyptic cave, to the monastery. This road is used by the buses and taxis.

Chief of all the documents in the monastery library is the Bull of Alexius Comnenus, authorizing the founding of the institution. It is 9 ft. long and about 16 in. wide. The writing is large and easily read. Other manuscripts and documents in the library include a 7th-century edition of Job written in uncial letters on vellum. This manuscript is beautified with illustrations representing Job's sons and daughters and Job's personal history. Another prize is called the Porphrios Codex, which contains most of Mark's Gospel. Henry Tozer reported that other parts of the same manuscript, containing fragments of other Gospels, were to be found in the Vatican (six leaves), in the British Museum (four leaves), and in Vienna (two leaves). (See Henry Fanshawe Tozer, *The Islands of the Aegean*, p. 190.) He called it Codex N, and identified it as a quarto manuscript of the 6th century. It has double columns, and is written on a variety of purple vellum said to be rare. The names of God and of Christ were written in gold. The monastery became famous for its 900 precious manuscripts and many old printed books.

The monks of Patmos, like those of Cyprus and many other places, know too little about the Bible. It has surprised some learned visitors to find that most of the monks have but a limited education. A century ago Tischendorf was astonished to find that they did not have a single document dealing with the text of the Apocalypse. (See James Culross, *John, Whom Jesus Loved*, p. 76 n.)

Monastery treasures are well guarded. These consist of miters, crowns, crosses, of various sorts—some containing precious jewels—vestments, priests' staves, and religious paintings. Highly valued relics are also among the treasured possessions of the monastery. The monks claim that besides the body of Christodulus they have various bones or pieces of bones of other holy men of past ages. They preserve the shoes and the staff of the founder of the monastery. Also, at times, the monks display a chain by which, they assert, John was bound when he was a prisoner.

The Apocalyptic Cave.—About halfway down the hillside from the monastery is a stone cave about the size of a small apartment. An unconfirmed tradition declares this to be the place where John lived while on Patmos. Today the cave is lighted by hanging lamps, and above it, a fairly large chapel has been built. In the roof of the cave are three large cracks which the monks tell the visitor were caused by an earthquake when the Lord said, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end." They have a tradition

that the three cracks represent the members of the Trinity, and consider the meeting of the three at a common center as indicating the unity of the Trinity.

One visitor was shown iron hooks driven in the roof and told that John's bed was suspended from them. Another curious tradition says that a stone ledge along one wall was the desk, or table, at which John stood to write the Revelation. A hole in the wall, near the floor, is said to be where he placed his head while kneeling in prayer, and another small niche cut in the stone wall, about two ft. from the floor, where he is supposed to have placed his hand while lifting himself up from prayer.

Other features of interest inside the cave are the apocalyptic symbols painted in color on the once-white ceiling. Among these are the seven angels pouring out the seven last plagues from their vials, the woman standing on the moon wearing a crown with twelve stars, and the beast of Revelation 13 coming up out of the earth. However, the dampness of the cave has caused the paint to blister and peel so badly that the pictures are greatly damaged.

On one side wall are seven panels on which are inscribed the promises to the seven churches. Outside the cave, over the door, is a plaque bearing a quotation from Gen. 28:17, "How dreadful is this place! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven." Originally these words were spoken by Jacob after his dream of the ladder that reached from earth to heaven. The monks hold that the place where John is believed to have seen his vision of the things recorded in the Revelation was likewise as "the gate of heaven" to him.

II. John in Exile

John on Patmos.—As to whether John was banished to Patmos, various divergent views have been set forth. Some who are not certain that John was *banished* to Patmos still admit that he was there for a time, and that he wrote the Revelation there. However, C. M. Yonge quotes an "Ancient Latin Hymn" entitled "The Exile of Patmos," which iterates the strong traditional belief:

"Through Rome's infuriated city,
From Caesar's judgment chair,
They drag Christ's beloved disciple,
The Saint with silver hair.
"To desert islands banished,
With God the exile dwells,
And sees the future glory
His mystic writing tells."

(In *The Pupils of Saint John the Divine*, p. 71.)

Victorinus, in his Latin commentary (c. A.D. 300), claims that John was on the island of Patmos, "condemned to the labour of the mines by Caesar Domitian" (*Commentary on the Apocalypse*, on ch. 10:11; *ANF*, Vol. 7, p. 353). Ramsay, though believing John to have been sent to Patmos as an exile, denies that mines existed on the island (see W. M. Ramsay, *The Letters to the Seven Churches of Asia*, p. 85). Ellen G. White says that "Patmos, a barren, rocky island in the Aegean Sea, had been chosen by the Roman government as a place of banishment for criminals; but to the servant of God this gloomy abode became the gate of heaven. Here, shut away from the busy scenes of life, and from the active labors of former years, he had the companionship of God and Christ and the

heavenly angels, and from them he received instruction for the church for all future time” (AA 570, 571).

The overwhelming testimony of the large majority of authorities in the early church favors the view that John the son of Zebedee was indeed an exile on Patmos. As Bishop Trench observes, the Romans considered it a common form of punishment to banish criminals “or those accounted as such, to rocky and desolate islands” (Richard Chenevix Trench, *Commentary on the Epistles to the Seven Churches in Asia* [1861], p. 18).

Critical View That John Was Not on Patmos.—In spite of John’s reference to being on Patmos (Rev. 1:9), a few critics of great name have challenged the fact.

Knowing full well the testimony of Tertullian, Origen, Eusebius, Jerome, and others, Eichhorn wrote in his *Introduction to the New Testament*:

“The banishment of John to Patmos must be a mere matter of imagination. ... For real history nowhere says, that John was banished to Patmos; and what ecclesiastical tradition says respecting this, has no other source than the Apocalypse interpreted in an unpoetical manner, which has substituted fact in the place of fiction”; Einleit. II. 367”

(Moses Stuart, *Commentary on the Apocalypse*, vol. 1, p. 257).

Eichhorn further argued:

“But banishment was the penalty for making proselytes to the Christian religion, in those times; and Patmos was a very appropriate place for exile. John, therefore, imagines that had been done to him, which was so commonly done to Christians who were his contemporaries; and thus he places himself in the most complete solitude, a condition most of all appropriate to such visions as the Apocalypse relates;” Einleit. § 190”

(Stuart, *op. cit.*, p. 258).

To these objections Stuart aptly replies by asking:

“... what more reason is there to doubt that John was in Patmos, when he saw the visions described in the Apocalypse, than there is to doubt that Ezekiel was by the river Chebar, when he saw the vision related in the first chapter of his work? Or that Daniel was in Shushan, in the palace, in the province of Elam ([Dan. 8:2](#)), when he saw the vision of the ram and the he-goat? ...

“If Patmos be merely a fictitious place, why should John select it? Why did he not rather choose Sinai, or Carmel, or Hermon, or the Mount of Transfiguration where he had before seen Moses and Elijah from the heavenly world conversing with Jesus? These were consecrated spots, as one would naturally suppose, and therefore they would most readily occur to his mind, as appropriate places for a revelation. Why choose a *Grecian* islet, not once named elsewhere in all the sacred books, and scarcely twice or thrice by all the ancient writers of the heathen world?”

(*loc. cit.*).

Another critical scholar, though conceding that John was possibly on Patmos, fails to see that he was there as an exile, but thinks he was taken there for the sole purpose of having the visions recorded in the Revelation. To this argument Stuart again says:

“Why this was necessary, or specially useful, to John as the subject of divine communications, he does not tell us. ...

“That John, then, was at Patmos, and was there as an exile, when he saw the apocalyptic visions, there remains no good reason to doubt. And so the united voice of antiquity declares. Whether this union of the ancient fathers depends on any other testimony, except what John himself has given in [1:9](#), we do not and cannot know, unless some new evidence respecting this matter should hereafter be presented. Enough, if it has been shown what the proper meaning of John’s words is”

(*op. cit.*, pp. 259, 260).

The Life of an Exile.—Two kinds of exile are said to have been used by the Romans:

(1) *deportatio*, or exile for life to some isolated place, together with a loss of property and other rights; (2) *relegatio*, exile for a limited time, or it might be for life, without loss of possessions or rights. After mentioning this fact Stuart asks: “Who can show us, that the exile of John was not one of the latter class? Such was that of Ovid, as may be seen in his

Tristia ii. 135 seq.; and Tertullian twice applies *relegatur* to the banishment of John, *Apology 5; Prescription Against Heretics 36*; and Jerome does the same” (*op. cit.*, p. 262).

Even though, as we have seen, Ramsay believed that “there were no mines in Patmos,” which may have been true, yet even he believed that John was condemned to hard work of an extremely severe variety (W. M. Ramsay, *The Teaching of Paul in Terms of the Present Day*, p. 61). He even refers to John’s convict life on Patmos as a “living death” (*ibid.*, p. 61).

Some have suggested that John worked in stone quarries on Patmos. Although it is possible that such quarries once existed, the modern inhabitants of the island appear to know nothing of them. At least it is likely that some form of hard labor was required of prisoners.

Edwin R. McGregor relates something of the suffering that John probably endured: “... It [Patmos] has ever been practically isolated from the rest of the world. ... A more cruel prison could not have been found in the Roman Empire, for a man of ninety-five, of fully developed social instincts, refined morals, cultivated intelligence, and of lofty religious aspirations. His life in the estimation of the tyrant Domitian would be of short but painful duration, exposed to the severe privations and hardships of such an exile”

(*Patmos the History of the Kingdom of Heaven the True Church of Christ*, p. 263).

From the above statements, and many more of a similar nature that might be presented, it seems to be a safe conclusion that John was completely isolated during his exile, and could not have known much of what was taking place in the outside world, even in the churches he loved so much. Yet this experience, like that of Joseph in the prison house in Egypt, was overruled by God for a blessing. Ellen G. White declares, “Even in Patmos he made friends and converts” (AA 573). Everything that wicked men and demons combined to do to hinder John’s testimony failed to keep him from being heard by sinners in need of the Saviour. See illustration facing p. 737.

John’s Residence After Leaving Patmos.—It seems reasonable to credit the ancient tradition that John returned to Ephesus in Asia Minor after his release from Patmos, and carried on an important ministry among the churches of Asia Minor long after all the other apostles had died.

In a discourse entitled *Who Is the Rich Man That Is Saved?* Clement of Alexandria says, “Listen to a tale, which is not a tale but a narrative, handed down and committed to the custody of memory, about the Apostle John. For when, on the tyrant’s [Domitian’s] death, he returned to Ephesus from the isle of Patmos, he went away, being invited, to the contiguous territories of the nations, here to appoint bishops, there to set in order whole churches, there to ordain such as were marked out by the Spirit” (xlii; *ANF*, vol. 2, p. 603). Domitian was assassinated on September 18, A.D. 96, by Stephanus, a freedman. When Nerva succeeded him, he is said to have given liberty to those who had been imprisoned unjustly by Domitian and to have freed John and permitted him to reside at Ephesus. John was by this time a very old man.

The Seven Churches of Revelation

I. Introduction

The seven cities to whose churches John wrote his well-known letters from the island of Patmos were in western Asia Minor. Two of them, Ephesus and Smyrna, were large port cities. Three, Thyatira, Philadelphia, and Laodicea, being centers of industry and

commerce for the areas in which they were located, enjoyed great prosperity and economic importance. Sardis and Pergamum, having formerly been capitals of powerful kingdoms, still possessed great political prominence in the time of John. The whole area in which the seven churches of Revelation were found is rich in historical memories of the early Christian period, and played a great role in ancient history. In this brief article only a few of the historical high lights can be mentioned.

Most of the coastal cities of western Asia Minor were founded by Anatolian tribes, but at an early time they were taken over by Greek colonists. For this reason western Anatolia possessed a strong Greek culture for many centuries. During the 7th and 6th centuries B.C. the powerful Lydian kingdom, which ruled over more than half of Asia Minor, had its capital at Sardis, one of the seven cities of Revelation. This kingdom gave way to the rule of the Persians when Cyrus defeated Croesus and in 547 B.C. took his fortress capital, though it had been considered impregnable. During the following two centuries a continuous but not quite successful struggle against the Persian rule was carried on by the Greeks of Asia Minor's western coastlands, until Alexander the Great freed them from the Persian yoke. Much military action was again seen during the Hellenistic period following Alexander's death. It was during this time that the wealthy kingdom of Pergamum was established. It ruled this area for almost 150 years, until it was taken over in the 2d century B.C. by Rome. For more than four centuries Rome administered it as the "Province of Asia," with Pergamum as its political capital.

It was during that time that some of the cities, whose names are well known to us from the book of Revelation, experienced their greatest glory and wealth. They also underwent a tremendous religious change, as paganism gave way to the Christian religion. The apostle Paul was probably the first Christian missionary who brought the gospel to western Asia Minor. He visited some of its cities several times during his various missionary journeys (Acts 18:19; 19:1; 20:17; 1 Tim. 1:3), and lived in one of them, Ephesus, for three years (Acts 20:31). From that city the gospel rapidly spread to other important parts of Western Asia Minor. The churches of at least two of the cities of this area were favored by Paul with personal letters—Colossae, Ephesus (see Introduction to Ephesians), and Laodicea (Col. 4:16). One other church in this area, Hierapolis, is mentioned by name (Col. 4:13).

Ephesus later became for many years the center of the rich ministerial activity of John, until his work was stopped by the persecution of Christians during the reign of Domitian toward the end of the 1st century. After having been tortured, the aged apostle was exiled to Patmos, a tiny island in the Aegean Sea (see pp. 80–85). It was on volcanic, rocky Patmos, which lies about 35 mi. (55 km.) off the coast of Asia Minor and about 55 mi. (c. 90 km.) from Ephesus, that John saw in vision the history of the Christian church throughout the ages until the end of time, and it was on Patmos that he received the divine messages for the seven churches (see Rev. 2; 3).

After the apostles and other missionaries had laid a good foundation in the 1st century A.D., Asia Minor became a stronghold of Christianity for many centuries. Some famous Church Fathers hailed from western Asia Minor, and several important church councils were held there. Gradually, however, Eastern Christianity lost its vitality and spiritual strength, with the result that it was unable to withstand the determined attacks of non-Christian invaders who poured into Asia Minor from time to time during the Middle Ages and who finally took over the whole area permanently. The last to come were the Turks,

who not only occupied the country but, as Moslems, eradicated Christianity so thoroughly that though one can find ruins of Christian churches in most cities, only a few Christian sanctuaries are still in use today.

The cities of the seven churches lie in comparatively close proximity to one another. The distance between any one church and its nearest neighbor is never greater than 50 mi. (80 km.), and the distance between the northernmost church, Pergamum, and the southernmost church, Laodicea, is about 137 mi. (c. 220 km.) in a straight line. The Journeys of Paul shows that they are so situated that it is possible to visit them in the sequence given in Revelation 2 and 3 without retracing one's steps. Passable roads connecting the seven cities have existed from earliest times, and excellent roads were built during the Persian period, as classical authors testify. The Romans, who were known throughout the ancient world as great road builders, also improved and extended the existing system of roads. Hence, travel conditions between the seven churches were comparatively good during the time of the apostles. But after the breakup of the Roman Empire the roads were neglected. For centuries tourists have complained about the poor condition of the roads in Asia Minor, which make travel extremely difficult and tiresome. Some of the roads are hardly passable for modern vehicles during the winter. The present government, however, is making progress toward remedying this situation.

Western Asia Minor is a region favored by nature. Proximity to the Mediterranean Sea results in a comparatively mild climate. Coastal cities like Ephesus, Smyrna, and Pergamum enjoy a pleasant climate all the year round. Inland cities like Laodicea and Philadelphia, although sharing to some extent the continental climate of the central Turkish highland, with some snow in the winter, are nevertheless close enough to the Mediterranean to benefit from its warm winds most of the year. The country is mountainous, and in some parts very rugged. Agriculture flourishes. Northern fruits, such as cherries, apples, and strawberries, grow, as well as olives and dates, typical fruits of the Mediterranean belt.

A number of medium-sized rivers irrigate this area, of which some have famous names in ancient history. One of them, the Maeander, for example, flows toward the sea in such a winding way that its name has been immortalized in the verb "to meander," by which the winding course of any river, like that of the Jordan in Palestine, is designated.

II. Ephesus

The Christian church at Ephesus was the first to receive a letter from John while he was exiled on the island of Patmos. The city had priority also in many other respects. With Alexandria in Egypt and Antioch in Syria, Ephesus shared the honor of being one of the largest and most important cities in the Eastern world during the period of the Roman Empire. But it was most honored for possessing one of the largest and most famous temples of antiquity, the Artemision, dedicated to the goddess Artemis, whom the Romans called Diana.

Unlike some other famous ancient cities of western Asia Minor, Ephesus now lies in ruins, its site abandoned. In its vicinity stands only a struggling Turkish village by the name of *Aya Soluk*, a corruption of *Hagios Theologos*, "the holy theologian," a title given first to John and later transferred as a name to the town. Its official name is now *Seljuk*. This village lies about 35 mi. (56 km.) south of *Izmir* (Smyrna) and can be reached by road or railway.

In *Seljuk* can be seen the ruins of an ancient aqueduct that formerly provided Ephesus with water. To the west of the village lies the sacred hill of Ephesus, the top of which is now occupied by the ruins of a Byzantine castle, while the ruins of the Basilica of St. John the Theologian lie on the southern slopes of this hill. Originally only a small chapel had stood on this site, where according to tradition John was buried, but a magnificent basilica 370 ft. (113 m.) in length was erected in its stead by the emperor Justinian (A.D. 527–565). In beauty and size this church was surpassed only by the Hagia Sophia of Constantinople. This church, like most others in Asia Minor, now lies in ruins, and of its marble walls and buttresses only stumps remain.

To the southeast of the Basilica of St. John lies the ruined monumental Mosque of Sultan Isa I, a structure 197 by 173 ft. (60 by 53 m.) that was built in the 14th century. Near the mosque is the site of the famous Artemision, now a deep depression in the ground that for parts of the year is filled with water. If a signboard had not been placed there by the Antiquities' Service, drawing the attention of tourists to the fact that it is the site of the great Temple of Diana, most visitors would pass by without recognizing it as the place where once stood one of the most famous structures of antiquity.

So thoroughly was this temple destroyed that its very site was forgotten. From 1863 to 1874 J. T. Wood carried on excavations at Ephesus on behalf of the British Museum, spending some \$80,000. His main goal, to find the Artemision, he realized after several years of search and after having removed 132,000 cubic yards (100,900 cu. m.) of earth. Even then he discovered no more than the foundation stones of the great structure, buried under 20 ft. (6 m.) of debris and soil. Wood found that the temple proper had stood on a platform, which was reached by a flight of ten steps surrounding it on all sides. The temple was 425 ft. (130 m.) long and 220 ft. (67 m.) wide, covering four times the area of the famous Parthenon of Athens. It had 117 columns (Pliny, erroneously, says 127), which were 66 ft. (20 m.) high and 7 ft. (2.13 m.) in diameter. Thirty-six of them had sculptured drums of human figures in life size.

From ancient records we learn that the former Temple of Diana was in process of building for 120 years prior to its completion between 430 and 420 B.C. This edifice is said to have been destroyed in 356 B.C., the year in which Alexander the Great was born, and was then rebuilt in greater splendor than before. The famous statue of Artemis, goddess of hunting and fertility, stood in the inner sanctuary of the temple. It was said by some ancient writers to have been made of black wood partly overlaid with gold, but leaving the head, arms, hands, and feet uncovered. Others, like the town clerk of Paul's day (Acts 19:35), claimed that it had fallen from heaven, for which reason some scholars think that it was made of a black meteor. Whatever the material may have been, the statue was a symbol of fertility, for which reason Artemis was depicted with many breasts.

The fame of the Artemision was due to many factors. Its size and the beauty of its architecture made it one of the most glorious buildings of antiquity. It was included by the ancients as one of the Seven Wonders of the World. Furthermore, numerous statues and other works of art produced by the most famous artists of the Greek world stood in the Artemision had added to its fame. Many kings and wealthy private individuals donated works of art to this temple as dedicatory gifts. Numerous feasts connected with the cult of Diana were celebrated on its grounds. These were occasions of much eating, drinking, and gross immorality. The most spectacular of these feasts lasted for several days during the month Artemisios (March-April), which was dedicated to Artemis.

During that month many visitors came to the city, and it was probably upon such an occasion that the riot against Paul took place (see Acts 19). The temple was also known as a place that granted the right of asylum to political fugitives, a privilege highly valued in ancient times. Furthermore, one of the richest and most skillfully managed banks of antiquity was administered by the priests of this temple. The result was that great sums of money were deposited in its vaults.

It is therefore not difficult to understand that any effort to undermine the authority and fame of this institution would encounter a most determined opposition from the population of Ephesus and from all those interested in perpetuating its system. In ancient inscriptions and by the town clerk of Ephesus the city is called the *neōkoros*, “temple keeper” (Acts 19:35, RSV), or “custodian,” of the great Artemis, a title of which the Ephesians were extremely proud. Therefore, when Paul’s work at Ephesus diminished the financial income of those who made their living in connection with the cult of Artemis, a great uproar was the result.

Although Paul, who had spent nearly three years laboring in Ephesus, left soon after the riot, the seed he had sown brought a plentiful harvest, and two centuries later the whole area was largely Christianized (see The Church in the Time of Constantine). Consequently the Temple of Diana lost its significance, and when it was burned by the Goths in A.D. 262, its influence had been reduced to such an extent that it was not rebuilt. Its marble columns were taken down and used in the building of Christian churches, some of them as far as Constantinople. What remained of this great world wonder was used by the local population as a stone quarry. Its large marble blocks were either cut up and used in building houses or burned to lime. Finally, the whole site was covered with debris, and the location was entirely forgotten until Wood rediscovered it in modern times.

A short distance to the south of the site of the Artemision begins the ruined site of the city proper, the largest city of Asia Minor during the time of the apostle Paul. On the basis of available evidence it has been estimated that Ephesus had a population of 225,000 in the 2d century B.C. The city grew extensively in size during the Roman period.

Ancient Ephesus, situated on the left bank of the Caÿster River and on a small bay that formed a natural harbor, was an important commercial center. It owed this importance, not to the Caÿster, which was neither the longest nor the most important river of western Asia Minor, but to an advantageous geographical location between two most important rivers which watered a rich agricultural area—the Maeander on the south and the Hermus on the north. For this reason many wealthy business houses were located in Ephesus, and its busy economic life made this city one of the richest of antiquity.

Coming from the Artemision, the ancient visitor entered the city through the Gate of Koressos, of which there are but fragmentary remains. Close by are the ruins of the stadium and those of the Gymnasium of Vedius—there were several gymnasiums found in every large Greek city—where young men practiced for the athletic games.

Continuing on the modern road leading through the ancient city, one soon reaches the comparatively well-preserved Great Theater, probably the largest of Asia Minor. It was a monumental structure whose 66 rows of seats were built into the western slopes of Mt. Pion. It seated 24,500 viewers. The orchestra had a diameter of about 100 ft. (30.5 m.) while the auditorium was 650 ft. (198 m.) in diameter. The stage has collapsed, but its

supporting pillars are still standing as well as parts of its sculptured back wall, which in ancient times was three stories high. This great amphitheater, where political gatherings were held, was the scene of the riot against the apostle Paul, vividly described in Acts 19:23–41. Whenever an important issue had to be decided the people went to the theater to hear it discussed and to make their decisions known to the administration. See illustration facing p. 353, Vol. VI.

The building of theater seats on the natural slopes, where hills or mountains were available for such a purpose, simplified construction, and also definitely improved the acoustics. From the highest row of seats of the theater one has an excellent bird's-eye view of the remains of the ancient city and its environs. To the north is the winding course of the Caÿster River. Somewhat closer by, partly hidden by trees and shrubbery, are the massive ruins of the Church of Saint Mary, in which two famous church councils were held, that of A.D. 431, which officially declared Mary to be the mother of God, and the so-called Robber Council of A.D. 449.

At the foot of the theater begins the Arkadiane, a 36-ft. (11 m.) street, the main connection between the center of the city and the ancient harbor to the west. Its white marble pavement glistens in the sunlight. Still standing are remnants of colonnaded streets, which were lighted at night. At the end of the Arkadiane, where formerly the harbor lay, there are now lush green fields, more fertile than any others in the vicinity, since they were formed by alluvial soil carried down the Caÿster. The present coast of the Aegean Sea lies about 3 mi. (5 km.) farther to the west. The silting up of the harbor, which the ancients were unable to prevent in spite of diligent efforts, was one of the reasons for the decline of Ephesus as an important mercantile city, and for its eventual abandonment.

To the west, behind the former harbor, rises the hill Astyages, on the slopes of which an ancient structure is pointed out as the traditional prison of Paul. However, there is no reliable evidence that the apostle was ever jailed in Ephesus. to the south lies Mt. Koressos, on whose ridge lie the remains of the Hellenistic city, whose wall formerly encircled Ephesus for a distance of 36,000 ft. (c. 11 km.) and enclosed an area of 1,027 acres (416 hectares).

In the valley between Mt. Koressos and Mt. Pion are the ruined public buildings of the ancient city. Among these are the large agora, the "market place"; the Serapeum, a temple dedicated to the Egyptian god Serapis; the library of Celsus; extensive Roman baths; aqueducts that brought water from the mountains to the city; the odeum, "a small music hall"; and others.

The agora, or market place, was the center of the social and economic life of every ancient city, and the size of the agora of Ephesus, of which only parts have been excavated, shows how important the city must have been. On all sides it was flanked by colonnaded sidewalks, behind which were shops. A number of these have been excavated and some even reconstructed, so that the modern visitor can visualize their former appearance. But what a contrast between the past and the present! Once this place was the busy center of a populous city in which the visitor saw beautiful buildings and statues, as well as an active metropolitan life. Now he is surrounded by broken columns, wall stumps, and heaps of earth and debris not yet excavated. Of the busy and noisy life that once filled this center of one of the Eastern world's largest cities, nothing is left. Of a great stone arch erected in honor of the emperor Augustus and his family by two

freedmen of Agrippa, a few large blocks are lying in the agora. The inscription, or dedication, calls Augustus the *pontifex maximus*, or chief high priest, of the empire, a title that was later taken over by the bishops of Rome.

South of the agora lies the famous library of Celsus, which in the course of time rivaled in importance that of Alexandria. It consisted of a lecture hall, and a reading room surrounded by alcoves in which expensive manuscripts were stored. The ruins of this famous library, founded in the time of John's ministry by one of Ephesus' most wealthy citizens, impresses the modern visitor.

III. Smyrna

Smyrna, now *Izmir*, is one of the most beautifully situated cities in Asia Minor. It lies at the head of a gulf, 40 mi. (64 km.) inland, and has a harbor well protected by surrounding mountains. The fact that it is a port city to which ocean ships have access, yet is situated in the heart of the region, has always given Smyrna an advantage over other cities of western Asia Minor and made it one of the most important trade centers of that area. To this can be added the fact that it lies in the fertile valley of the Meles River and that it enjoys ready access to the hinterland and to important cities such as Pergamum, Sardis, and Ephesus.

The earliest settlement was founded at a site to the north of the modern city by an Anatolian people called Lelages. From about 1100 B.C. it was peopled by Greek colonists, first by the Aeolians and later by the Ionians. Even when the city was in the possession of foreign powers such as the Lydians, Persians, or Turks, the majority of its population was usually Greek. The present site of Smyrna was chosen by Lysimachus, one of the generals and successors of Alexander the Great. In this he revealed good taste and keen foresight. Built against the slopes of the mountains surrounding the eastern part of the Hermaic Gulf, Smyrna has become one of the most important, as well as picturesque, cities of Western Asia.

The climate is pleasant, and profuse vegetation adds charm to the scenery. There are olive, cypress, fig, pomegranate, and plane trees, and even the date palm. The chief products of export today are the famous Smyrna figs, tobacco, silk, and the well-known Smyrna carpets. Minerals found in the mountains of the Smyrna region since ancient times include iron, manganese, gold, silver, mercury, lead, copper, and antimony. Some soft coal is mined in the region. Anciently, another attraction of Smyrna was its warm springs, which were frequented by people suffering from arthritis. Taken internally, the waters were said to relieve intestinal troubles.

There were thus excellent reasons why Smyrna became a rich and populous city. In fact, until the end of World War I it was the second largest city in Asia Minor, having a population of about 250,000. After the great fire of 1922 nearly destroyed the city and killed thousands of its inhabitants, and after tens of thousands of Greeks were driven out of Smyrna in 1922 and 1923, the city's population diminished. But according to the 1970 census it stood at 520,838. The size of its ancient population is not known.

As the modern city is built on top of ancient Smyrna, only a few ruins are now visible. Remnants of the old city walls of Lysimachus can be seen in a few places in the vicinity of modern *Izmir*, also several picturesque but ruined aqueducts. The ruins of the citadel, which dominate the scenery, are of Byzantine origin; only their lower parts go back to Roman and Hellenistic times. Like most ancient cities, Smyrna possessed a great

number of pagan temples, but few remains have been found. Statues, however, which formerly must have stood in these temples, are occasionally discovered in excavating for foundations of new houses.

The most interesting ruins of the ancient city are those of the agora, or market place, which was found in the heart of the modern city after World War I. For a long time archaeologists had unsuccessfully searched for the agora of Smyrna, which was famous in ancient times as the only agora constructed in three stories. The lowest level of shops was below ground, another row of shops was found at the street level, and a third row was on top of the colonnaded sidewalks surrounding the whole market place. Since its discovery, excavation and some restoration work has been carried out, which affords a modern visitor a vivid impression of this, the most famous market place of antiquity. The subterranean halls and shops are well preserved; in fact, some are in so excellent a state of preservation that they could be put to use in their present state. Of the ancient structures at the street level only a few columns now remain, and all traces of the second-floor level vanished long ago.

The ancient people of Smyrna were especially proud of their city as the birthplace of Homer, most famous of all Greek poets. Many ancient tourists visited Smyrna to pay homage to the memory of this illustrious man, as they would to other cities for the purpose of worshipping famous gods.

The Christian community in Smyrna has experienced numerous and severe periods of persecution. It is of interest to note that since ancient times the name Smyrna has been interpreted to mean "myrrh," a bitter but aromatic gum resin obtained from East Africa and Arabia, which symbolized bitterness and suffering. Modern scholars discredit this traditional interpretation in favor of a derivation from Samorna, the name of an Anatolian goddess who was worshiped in this city. Whatever the true interpretation of the city's name, it is a historical fact that the Christians of Smyrna have been seen more suffering than those of any other city of the region.

The city has frequently been destroyed, sometimes by earthquakes, more often by foreign armies. In the Christian Era it has been conquered and sacked by the barbarous Goths, the cruel Mongols, the fierce Seljuks, the zealous Crusaders, and in modern times by the Kemalist Turks. As an example of the horrors at times experienced by the Smyrneans, mention may be made of the massacre of almost all the inhabitants of the town by Timur (Tamerlane), the bloodthirsty Mongol conqueror of the 14th century who built a tower with the heads of captured Smyrneans. Even in modern times some of the greatest of massacres have taken place in Smyrna, as, for instance, in the struggle between the Greeks and the Turks after World War I. The city repeatedly changed hands, and unspeakable atrocities were committed in which it is claimed that tens of thousands perished.

The Christian community in Smyrna has suffered repeated persecution ever since John's time, as famous martyrs have laid down their lives within the walls of this city. Doubtless the most illustrious of these was Polycarp, a disciple of John and later bishop of Smyrna. He was burned alive (c. A.D. 155), either in the stadium or in the great theater, both being pointed out as the place where he met his death. Yet his death and the deaths of other valiant martyrs brought much fruit during the ensuing decades and centuries. Smyrna became one of the strongest centers of Christianity in the eastern half of the Roman Empire, and was the last city of Asia Minor to yield to the Moslem conquest.

Until World War I four out of every five inhabitants were Christians, which fact proves how tenaciously Smyrna's population had kept its religion. Yet it has finally shared the fate of all other Christian centers of Asia Minor, and has now succumbed to the Moslems. When the Greeks were driven from Smyrna by the Turks under Kemal Pasha in 1922, the Christian community there received its deathblow.

IV. Pergamum

Pergamum, situated in a wide valley about 3 mi. (5 km.) north of the Caicus River and about 15 mi. (c. 24 km.) from the sea, was another of the famous cities of Asia Minor. The palace, temples, theaters, gymnasiums, and other public buildings of ancient Pergamum were built on the summit and on the slopes of a high hill. The residential section of the city lay at its foot, at the site in the plain where lies where lies the modern town of *Bergama* (population c. 20,000).

This city was founded by Greek colonist. Though not much is known of its early history, it seems already to have been important in the 5th century B.C., as can be seen from the fact that it coined its own money as early as 420 B.C. More is known of its history from the 3d century B.C. onward. At that time Lysimachus, one of Alexander's generals and successors, deposited his state treasure of 9,000 gold talents in its strong fortress. After his death in 281 B.C. this treasure was appropriated by his custodian Philetaerus, who made himself ruler over Pergamum (283–263 B.C.). He became the founder of the rich Attalid dynasty, which occupied the throne for about 150 years. Although the history of the independent kingdom of Pergamum was short, it left its mark on the ancient world, and the wealth of its kings became proverbial, like that of the earlier Croesus of Sardis.

King Attalus I (241–197 B.C.) was the first great ruler of the kingdom. He had to fight against the Gauls, the ancestors of the Galatians of New Testament fame, who had invaded Asia Minor from the west and had settled in the center of Anatolia (see Additional Note on Acts 16). When the Gauls were decisively defeated in 240 B.C. Attalus was able to add much new territory to his kingdom. When he died, Pergamum ruled over all of Mysia, Lydia, Caria, Pamphylia, and Phrygia, a territory comprising almost half of Asia Minor. The wealth which poured into Pergamum from these areas in the form of tribute was used to beautify the capital to such an extent that it became one of the most wonderful cities of its time. It had so many temples, theaters, gymnasiums, and other monumental public buildings that it was acclaimed as the richest city in the world.

During the time of Eumenes II (197–159 B.C.), the next king, a library was founded, which grew into a collection of 200,000 manuscripts. This library aroused the jealousy of Ptolemy V of Egypt (203–181 B.C.). Fearing that it would soon excel the library of Alexandria, he imposed an embargo on papyrus, the most common writing material of the ancient world. Since Egypt was the only country in which papyrus rolls were made, he hoped in this way to curtail the production of books in foreign countries. This emergency became a blessing in disguise, for it led the bookmakers of Pergamum to invent parchment, the finest writing material ever produced. Parchment is a fine leather made of the hides of young animals, such as calves, lambs, or kids, by a refined tanning process. It has advantages over ordinary leather, which was also used as writing material by the ancients. Since this new writing material was invented at Pergamum, it received the name of *pergamēnos* in Greek and *pergamenus* in Latin. From these words the

modern *Pergament* in German, *parchemin* in French, *pergamino* in Spanish, and *parchment* in English are derived.

Eumenes' library was later removed from Pergamum by Mark Antony and presented as a gift to Cleopatra. In the Arabic conquest of Egypt it was destroyed, along with many other book collections of the ancient world.

Also during the time of Eumenes II, the great Altar of Zeus, the masterpiece of Pergamum's famous works of art, was erected; of this more will be said later. One of the most formidable technical works dating from his reign was an aqueduct for carrying water, under pressure, to the acropolis of Pergamum. This water came from mountain springs which lay higher than Pergamum's acropolis hill, by means of a pipe line several miles in length that crossed the plain in which the city is situated. Never had such an ambitious work been attempted in antiquity, nor was it imitated for centuries. The remains of this aqueduct are still visible.

Eumenes II was followed by only two more kings, Attalus II (159–138 B.C.) and Attalus III (138–133 B.C.). The reason Pergamum ceased to be an independent kingdom was that the last-mentioned monarch, a great admirer of Rome, willed his kingdom to the Romans. They took it over after his death, and, by 129 B.C., had organized part of it as the province of Asia, with Pergamum for a capital. Although in the course of time Pergamum lost some of its fame to Ephesus and Smyrna, and finally saw Ephesus become the capital of the province, nevertheless it remained for centuries one of the most illustrious and wealthy cities of western Asia Minor.

A Christian church was established in Pergamum during the apostolic age, as is indicated in the third letter found in the book of Revelation (ch. 2:12–17). This letter mentions the good qualities of the church and the fact that Antipas, a faithful martyr, had been slain in this city, but also severely rebukes the Christians of Pergamum for tolerating idolatry and immorality within the church. The city became a Christian center and retained that position for centuries. In A.D. 1304 it was conquered by the Seljuks, and 32 years later by Suleiman. Since then it has been Turkish, and has gradually diminished in size to the insignificant town that it now is.

Since 1878 excavations have been carried out intermittently by the German Government among the ruins of Pergamum, mainly on the acropolis. During these years an extensive area has been uncovered, which gives the modern visitor a good concept of the layout of the ancient city. Descriptions of the various temples dedicated to Zeus, Dionysus, Athena, Demeter, and other gods, as well as descriptions of the ruins of the royal palace, of the various theaters, gymnasiums, and other public buildings would become tiresome. Only two of the most famous structures in Pergamum will be briefly described, both of which have been declared by different Bible commentators to be "Satan's seat" mentioned in John's letter to Pergamum (Rev. 2:13). One of these structures is the Altar of Zeus, already mentioned, which was built by Eumenes II in the 2d century B.C., and the other is the Asclepieion, one of the most famous of all ancient hospitals.

The Altar of Zeus was not only a tremendous structure, being 127 ft. (37 m.) wide, and 40 ft. (12 m.) high, but also a masterpiece of art and architecture. It consisted of a two-story hall built in the form of a horseshoe, with the lower part covered with beautiful sculptured reliefs depicting the war between Pergamum and the Gauls. The upper parts were formed by colonnades. This illustrious altar structure naturally formed a great

attraction to the city, and some commentators have thought it to be “Satan’s seat” to which the revelator referred. K. Humann, the first excavator of Pergamum, discovered this altar and extracted its sculptured slabs of stone from the Byzantine city walls in which they had been incorporated in later times. All this material was transported to Berlin, where the whole altar was reconstructed in the “Pergamus Museum,” and fortunately escaped destruction from the ravages of World War II. After the war it was dismantled by the Russians and shipped to the East, but was later returned. See illustration facing p. 737.

The other great and famous landmark of Pergamum, thought by some commentators to be the “Satan’s seat” mentioned in Revelation, was the Asclepieion, a large compound dedicated to Asclepius, the god of healing, one of the four main gods of Pergamum. This large compound, to which multitudes of sick people traveled from great distances to find relief from their ailments, has been excavated since 1928. In it were found the ruins of several buildings, such as halls in which the patients were kept and received water treatments, an amphitheater where they were entertained, and subterranean rooms where they were put to sleep to receive in their dreams divine messages as to the treatments they should get. Finally, it contained also a round temple in which the patients deposited their offerings before leaving the compound, just as modern patients pay their bills in the business office of a hospital before being discharged. In the courtyard of this Asclepieion stands a monument with the two Asclepius snakes in relief, the symbol of the medical profession, which has been in use from ancient times to the present day.

The most famous physician of antiquity, Galen (c. A.D. 130–c. 200), was born in Pergamum and trained in the medical profession in its Asclepieion. He studied further at Smyrna, Corinth, and Alexandria. His influence in the field of medical science was strongly felt throughout the Middle Ages, and his writings show that the physicians of his time had some scientific knowledge about the functions of the human body, as well as about the healing power of certain medicines and therapeutic methods of treatment.

V. Thyatira

Thyatira was an old Lydian city lying on the river Lycus, a tributary of the Hermus, in the northern part of Lydia, but so close to the border of Mysia that even the ancients frequently referred to it by mistake as a Mysian city. Its early history is not well known, except that it was a holy city of the Lydian sun god Tyrimnos, depicted regularly as a horseman god. By the 3d century B.C. the city had apparently fallen into decay, and was founded anew by Seleucus Nicator (305–281 B.C.), who colonized it with Greeks. From that time on Thyatira remained one of the smaller Hellenistic cities of western Asia Minor. Although it became the commercial center of the Lycus Valley, it was never a metropolis like Ephesus, Smyrna, or Pergamum.

Since the city seems to have enjoyed a rather tranquil and peaceful life during most of its existence, its history is rather colorless in comparison with the history of cities like Smyrna or Ephesus. The nearest Thyatira came to being involved in a war was in 190 B.C., when Antiochus the Great put his military forces in this city in anticipation of meeting the Roman army. However, the ensuing battle between him and Scipio took place at Magnesia, some 75 mi. (120 km.) south by west of Thyatira, and by this good fortune the city escaped harm.

The ancient city is buried underneath *Akhisar*, a town with a 1974 population of 46,167, whose chief industry is now rug making. The Turkish name *Akhisar*, “White Castle,” comes from the white ruins of a medieval castle that lie near the modern town. Scientific excavations have never been conducted in this town, but in diggings carried out by the townspeople for the laying of foundations for their houses ancient artifacts have frequently been found. Numerous inscriptions have thus come to light, and these have found their way into various museums.

Ancient Thyatira was a city of guilds. In no other city of Western Asia were the various craftsmen organized into well-disciplined guilds as in this city. Among them the guild of the dyers occupied a most prominent place. The dyers of Thyatira had learned to make purple dyestuff from the madder root instead of the shellfish, as was done in other purple-producing centers of the ancient world. This purple dye, now called Turkish red, enabled the dyers of Thyatira to compete successfully with other centers of dyemaking. Lydia, one of the first converts of Paul in Philippi, was called “a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira” (Acts 16:14). Apparently, this Anatolian city had business agents in foreign countries such as Macedonia, in which Philippi was situated.

Ancient Thyatira possessed a temple, dedicated to a deity called Sambathe, in which an officiating prophetess gave oracles. Some Bible commentators have thought that the words of John about “Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants” (Rev. 2:20) refer to this oracle-giving prophetess in the temple of Sambathe. The correctness of this interpretation is, however, questionable, and it is equally uncertain whether W. M. Ramsay is correct in seeing references in this fourth letter of the Revelation (ch. 2:18–29) to the compromising Christian members of certain guilds. He thinks that many church members were still living under the discipline of their respective guild organizations, to which they had belonged before they became Christians, and that they continued to take part in some of the immoral and questionable practices during feasts and other gatherings.

That the church of Thyatira lost its purity and experienced troubles in the early centuries of the Christian Era, seems evident from a remark made by the Church Father Epiphanius, who claims that in the beginning of the 3d century the whole city and its environs had embraced the Montanist heresy. Otherwise not much is known of the history of the Christian church of this city, whose spiritual condition became a type of the fallen church of the entire Middle Ages.

VI. Sardis

Nearly 50 mi. (80 km.) east of Smyrna and 3 mi. (5 km.) south of the river Hermus lay Sardis, the capital of the Lydian kingdom. Its acropolis was built on a spur of the northern slopes of Mt. Tmolus, to which the river Pactolus, a tributary of the Hermus, formed a natural moat on two sides. The earliest city had lain entirely within strong protective walls on the acropolis hill, but later extended to the plain at its foot.

The city first appears in history as the capital of the Lydian kingdom, in the 7th century B.C. It was here at about this time that coins were invented and used as money for the first time in history. Thus the ancient Lydians gained the honor of making an invention of lasting and worldwide importance.

On the history of the Lydian kingdom and the conquest of Sardis by Cyrus the Great see Vol. III of this Commentary, pp. 50–54. After its conquest by Cyrus, Sardis, the

proud and rich capital of a kingdom, became the seat of a Persian satrap, and in the palace in which once the fabulously rich kings of Lydia had resided, the Persian satraps took up their domicile. About 500 B.C. Sardis experienced its first major tragedy, when the Ionians rose up in rebellion against the Persian rule and burned the lower city. Darius the Great was furious and wanted to avenge this crime. He ordered his servants to remind him every morning of the fire of Sardis. The Persian wars against Greece were the result of Darius' anger, and it was from Sardis that Artaphernes, Darius' brother, started out on the first Persian campaign against Greece in 490 B.C. Sardis was also the seat of Cyrus the Younger, who, as satrap, fought the famous battle at Cunaxa in 401 B.C. against his brother Artaxerxes II, following which Xenophon and his 10,000 Greeks gained immortal fame.

The city changed hands frequently after the Persian period. Alexander the Great took it in 334 B.C., and Antigonos, one of his generals, took it again 12 years later. From 301 B.C. Sardis was in the hands of the Seleucids for more than 100 years. It was during this period that the acropolis was captured in the same way as it had been in the time of Cyrus. In 218 B.C., during a siege by Antiochus the Great, a Cretan soldier scaled the wall and opened the city to the besieging forces.

In 190 B.C. the city became part of the kingdom of Pergamum, for some 60 years. When this kingdom was taken over by the Romans in 133 B.C., Sardis shared its fate, having already lost much of its importance to cities like Ephesus and Smyrna. In A.D. 17 it was badly damaged by an earthquake, but Tiberius assisted in its reconstruction by exempting it from taxes for five years and providing it with extra funds. Once more Sardis experienced a period of prosperity, and after the breakup of the Roman province of Asia in A.D. 295 it again became the capital of Lydia. The city came successively under the rule of the Byzantine emperors, the Arabs, and the Turks. In the 15th century and after, the acropolis was abandoned, and Sardis gradually became a village. After changing fortunes through the centuries, Sardis was leveled by an earthquake in 1595. Thereafter the population dwindled until only nomads remained. The city that had once been the capital of one of the three leading kingdoms of the ancient world (Lydia, Babylon, and Egypt) ended as a heap of ruins.

Before excavations began, the corrosive forces of nature had cut deeply into the sides of the acropolis hill and thus laid bare broken walls and unidentified structures. Two protruding columns were all that could be seen of the large temple of Artemis, the mother goddess of Asia Minor, whose worship somewhat resembled that of the Artemis (Latin, Diana) of Ephesus.

This temple had fallen into ruin, and was deeply covered with debris when an American expedition from Princeton University, directed by H. C. Butler, began its excavation (1910–1914, 1922). Only the tops of two of its many columns were protruding from the soil, thus betraying to the explorers the site of the ancient temple. As they removed a 50-ft. (15 m.) layer of debris and soil, the whole temple was uncovered, and its lower parts of masonry were found to be comparatively well preserved. Many of its columns were found standing to about half their original height. We are therefore able to form an accurate picture of the ground plan and the structural details of this great temple, which measured 330 by 165 ft. (100 by 50 m.). The columns were of about the same size as those of the Artemision of Ephesus, and two of them are still standing to their original height of 66 ft. (20 m.), with their capitals in place. Many of the others are

preserved to a height of about 30 ft. (9 m.). Built up of drums about 7 ft. (2.13 m.) in diameter, the columns rest on bases that contain exquisite sculptured leaf designs, each different from the others.

Beside this temple stand the remains of a small brick church from the period after Constantine. No traces remain of the church to which the letter of the Revelator was addressed.

The Sardis of John's time was still in the process of reconstruction after it had been destroyed by the earthquake of A.D. 17. Its glory seemed to have already departed when he reminded the Christian community there that the city had a name, or reputation, for being alive while in reality it was dead (Rev. 3:1). However, the city recovered, and by the year 200 it had reached the peak of its growth and area, with a population estimated at more than 100,000. It was a provincial capital under Rome.

From 1958 to 1971 excavations were conducted in Sardis by Harvard and Cornell universities, with other organizations, directed by G. M. A. Haufmann. These excavations produced many works of art, other objects, and inscriptions, which threw much light on the life of the city from pre-Lyidian to Islamic times. Many buildings were excavated and several partly restored, including a gymnasium and a large synagogue.

The present Turkish village at the site bears the famous ancient name in only slightly altered form, *Sart*.

VII. Philadelphia

Philadelphia was situated on the river Cogamus, a southern branch of the Hermus. As an inland city of Anatolia it lay about 75 mi. (120 km.) east of Smyrna, and was built upon a terrace 650 ft. (198 m.) above sea level on the easternmost slopes of the Tmolus Mountains. Behind the city are volcanic cliffs which were formed in historical times, although no written records of volcanic activity are extant. As in other volcanic areas, the soil around Philadelphia is most fertile, with the result that some of the finest vineyards of western Asia Minor are found in the vicinity of this city.

Philadelphia was the youngest of the seven cities to which the letters of Revelation were addressed. Founded in the reign of King Attalus II Philadelphus of Pergamum, it received the name Philadelphia, "Brotherly Love," in honor of King Attalus' loyalty to his elder brother Eumenes II, who had preceded him on the throne of Pergamum. Philadelphia was called by various names. In the 1st century A.D. it was renamed Neo-Caesarea in honor of the emperor Tiberius, who assisted in the recovery of the city from the destructive earthquake of A.D. 17. Later it returned to its former name, and in Vespasian's time it added the name Flavia after the emperor's family. It was known as Philadelphia when John wrote the Revelation (ch. 3:7-13) letter to the church of that city.

The modern name of Philadelphia's successor is *Alashehir*. This name has been explained by some visitors, misled by an insufficient knowledge of Turkish, to be an abbreviation of *Allah-shehir*, "the city of God." The name really means "the reddish city," because of the reddish color of the volcanic soil on which the city is built.

Since Philadelphia lay on a main road between upper Phrygia and Smyrna, it became an important inland city and amassed enough wealth to build sumptuous temples and other magnificent public buildings. For this reason ancient writers referred to Philadelphia as Little Athens. Yet it never obtained the political, economic, or religious importance possessed by some of the other cities already described.

Christianity seems to have entered Philadelphia in the apostolic period, as must be concluded from the fact that the Revelation includes a letter to the church in this city. Otherwise, nothing is known of the early history of that church. In later times Philadelphia became the seat of a bishop, and in the 13th century was the Christian center of the whole country of Lydia, being the residence of an archbishop. During the following centuries it appears as a stronghold of Christianity, with much moral strength to withstand the onslaught of barbarian nations that repeatedly overran Asia Minor. The citizens of Philadelphia had every reason to be proud of their history in this respect. Successfully they withstood a siege by the Seljuks in A.D. 1306 and forced the enemy to withdraw, and again remained unconquered in A.D. 1324, when the Seljuks made a second attempt to take the city. No other city of Asia Minor could boast of such a valiant record. Yet after a long resistance the city fell to the Turks in A.D. 1390, and was then conquered by Timur (Tamerlane) in 1402. The Philadelphians were no match for Timur's fierce Mongolian hordes, although they put up a heroic resistance. The city was taken by storm, and Timur built a wall of the corpses of Philadelphia's gallant victims, as he had built a tower of the skulls of captured Smyrneans during the siege of their unhappy city. The spot where this gruesome event took place is still pointed out by the citizens of *Alashehir*.

This catastrophe neither destroyed the will of the Philadelphian Christians to survive nor quenched their determination to remain faithful to their religion. It seems that they were conscious of the admonition to hold what they had, so that no man would take their crown (Rev. 3:11). Even when the whole country was eventually taken over by the Turks, and Christianity in Asia Minor died a slow but certain death, Philadelphia remained, like Smyrna, a Christian city. It is a remarkable coincidence that the two cities, Smyrna and Philadelphia, which retained their Christian character and population longer than any other cities of Asia Minor, are the same cities whose churches were so pure and blameless in John's time that the letters written to them are the only ones containing no words of rebuke.

At the end of World War I the majority of the population of *Alashehir* was still Christian. However, the city then shared the fate of Smyrna, and saw its Christian population driven out by the Kemalist Turks in 1923. For this reason the modern visitor finds in this city only the ruined buttresses and walls of a large cathedral, in the center of the city beside a well-kept Moslem mosque, and hears, instead of the bells of a Christian church, the imam's call to prayer from the height of a minaret.

A visit to old Philadelphia not only is a sad experience to a Christian visitor but also brings disappointment to the archeologist who seeks for remains of the city's glorious past. He finds the miserable remnants of the old city wall a habitation of storks and overgrown with weeds and grass. A few unidentifiable ruins remain but nothing of the glorious temples, the stately gymnasiums, and the grand theaters of antiquity, through which Philadelphia had once earned the name Little Athens. The destructive work of the past centuries has been so thoroughgoing that hardly any trace of its former greatness can be found.

VIII. Laodicea

Nearly 100 mi. (c. 160 km.) east of Ephesus was Laodicea, the last of the seven cities to whose churches John addressed the letters found in Revelation. It was in the valley of

the river Lycus, which flows between mountains that rise to heights of 8,000 and 9,000 ft. (2,440 m. and 2,740 m.). This river Lycus in Phrygia, a tributary of the river Maeander, should not be confused with the Lycus on which Thyatira was situated, a tributary of the Hermus. Laodicea was not far from the Phrygian Lycus at an elevation of about 800 ft. (c. 250 m.) above sea level, on the main road from Ephesus to the Euphrates. It was founded probably by Antiochus II (261–246 B.C.), one of the Seleucid rulers of the Hellenistic era, who named the city after Laodice, his sister and wife, and populated it with Syrians and Jews transplanted from Babylonia. During the first century of its existence Laodicea was an insignificant town, but its importance increased rapidly after the formation of the Roman province of Asia in the 2d century B.C.

Lying in a country where great flocks of black sheep were raised, Laodicea became the trade center for glossy black wool and for black garments of local manufacture. Both the wool and the garments were exported to many countries. The city was also known as an export center for the famous Phrygian eye powder, and as a strong financial center, with several great banking houses that attracted much wealth. It obtained, furthermore, fame for being near the temple of Men Karou, where a well-known school of medicine was conducted.

Thus Laodicea was known during Roman times as one of the richest cities of the East. The emperor Nero called it “one of the illustrious cities of Asia,” when offering the Laodiceans financial help for reconstruction after a severe earthquake had destroyed it in A.D. 60. The proud and wealthy citizens, however, refused this aid and told their would-be benefactor that they had enough financial resources to rebuild their city without help from outside.

A knowledge of the history of Laodicea, of its wealth, and chief products adds to the meaning of certain statements in the letter John addressed to its Christian community (Rev. 3:14–22). Its members felt that they were “rich, and increased with goods” and had “need of nothing,” while in reality they were spiritually “wretched, and miserable, and poor” (v. 17). But the Lord advised them not to trust in the gold of their banks, but “to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich” (v. 18). He also counseled them, “buy of me . . . white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear” (v. 18). Some commentators see in this a reference to the fact that the Laodiceans were proud of the glossy black garments produced in their city and exported to many countries. Why, then, should anyone say that they were “naked” (v. 17)? Commentators also believe that the pride of the Laodiceans in their famous Phrygian eye powder was the background for the counsel “to buy of me . . . eyesalve, that thou mayest see” (v. 18).

That the Christian church at Laodicea was founded in the early apostolic period is attested by the apostle Paul, who addressed a letter to it, which seems to have been lost (see on Col. 4:16). The church seems to have grown rapidly, so that Laodicea became the seat of a bishop in the 2d century. One of its bishops, Sagaris, died there as a martyr in A.D. 166. Mentioned in various records are other Christian martyrs of Laodicea who laid down their lives during the persecutions of the first centuries of the Christian Era. In the 4th century the city was the seat of an important church council.

In the 11th century the city was conquered by the Seljuks, but the Christian Crusaders recovered it in A.D. 1119. Two centuries later, however, it was destroyed by the Turks, and has never been rebuilt. In its stead a new city, which bears the name *Denizli*, was

founded near a spring of water in the vicinity of Laodicea. Building material for this new city was obtained from the ruins of old Laodicea, which was used as a quarry. The Turkish name of the ruined site is now *Eski Hisar*, meaning “Old Castle.”

Scientific excavations have never been carried out at this site, although a large area covered with ruins promises rich rewards to any archeological expedition that puts the spade into it. Two Roman theaters are comparatively well preserved, and a large stadium can also be recognized. Colonnades, aqueducts that brought water to the city, and the ruins of early churches are also visible, although definite identifications of the various ruins can be made only after excavation.

History of the Interpretation of the Apocalypse

I. Bird’s-eye View of Advances and Recessions in Exposition

Apocalypse Rejected, Then Re-established.—When the Christian Era dawned, the book of Daniel was already established as an integral part of the Old Testament canon, but the book of Revelation was not written until about A.D. 100. Some three hundred years were required before it was finally accepted in all quarters as a genuine writing of the apostle John, and consequently canonical.

The reason for the hesitancy was that certain extravagances had early attached themselves to the interpretation of the prophecy of the 1000 years of ch. 20. The chiliasts, who fervently taught the reign of the saints with Christ on earth during the 1000 years, had injected certain concepts of fantastic fertility and prosperity that would allegedly mark the period. These “carnal” extravagances, which had been drawn from both Jewish apocalyptic and pagan tradition, in time brought the entire book under criticism and challenge. The aftermath of such questioning persisted as late as Luther’s day, and forms part of modernism’s critical charges in our time.

Complement and Completion of Daniel.—The book of Revelation is clearly the complement, the completion, and the unveiling of the prophecies of Daniel. But by John’s time Rome, the *fourth* world power in the Daniel series, had become the historical starting point, just as Babylon had been for Daniel. The Apocalypse unfolds various features characterizing the period of this fourth world power—its rule, its divisions, the religio-political conflicts, and the triumphant outcome. The Apocalypse outlines the great conflict between the true church and the false in the entire Christian Era. It introduces powers and developments not brought out in Daniel’s cryptic outline.

Culminates With Last-Day Crisis.—The Revelation stresses the developments and sequences of the last things, known theologically as eschatology. It sets forth major events of the last days—the final movements in the great conflict of the ages. It outlines God’s last message and appeal to men, the ultimate issues that terminate in the close of probation, the punishments poured out upon impenitent apostates, and the glorious and eternal triumph of righteousness. It includes the rise of the second advent movement and message, and characterizes the remnant, the seventh and final segment of the true church of the centuries. It is therefore pre-eminently a “present truth” prophecy, highly pertinent for today, and should be understood in relation to the expositional background of the centuries.

The book of Revelation throws light and understanding upon the Old Testament prophecies, especially the predictions of Daniel. The symbols and time periods of the two great apocalyptic prophecies, Daniel and the Revelation, are tied inseparably together.

Time Prophecies Are Involved.—The value of a coordinated approach to the two books may be seen in the unfolding of the year-day principle in the variously repeated time periods of 1260 days—42 months, or 3 1/2 times. This year-day principle had been applied in the early church; Tichonius used it of the 3 1/2 days of the two witnesses. Then Joachim of Floris (c. 1130–1202) extended it to the flight of the “woman,” or church, of Rev. 12 into the wilderness for 1260 years. That new application was a fundamental advance. In time it led to a similar application to Daniel’s longest prophetic period, the 2300 year-days, which eventually came to be recognized as spanning, besides the 1260, 1290, and 1335 year-day periods, the 10 days of unparalleled persecution in the early church, the 3 1/2 days of the two witnesses, and the “five months” and the 391 years of the woe trumpets of the Apocalypse. Only the 1000-year period of Rev. 20 was seen to lie beyond the scope of the 2300 days.

Battle of Centuries Over Millennium.—Some features of the Apocalypse were discerned with remarkable clarity and accuracy at the time of fulfillment, widely heralded then, and consistently retained thereafter. Other aspects were subject to gross distortions and setbacks that permanently affected the understanding and welfare of the church and the nations, more than was the case with any of the prophecies of Daniel.

Tichonius and Augustine thrust the 1000 years back to begin at the first advent and to span the Christian Era. Augustine’s exposition of this perverted view of the millennium became the basis of the dominant concept and philosophy of the Middle Ages, that the Catholic Church was the reign of Christ on earth. While repudiated by Protestantism, the Augustinian millennium remains to this day the standard position of the Roman Catholic Church.

Not until some time after the Reformation was the millennium restored to its chronological place at the end of the age—as introduced by the second advent and bounded by the two resurrections. Soon thereafter a second perversion appeared. Daniel Whitby, Anglican rector, introduced in 1703 his revolutionary thesis that the 1000 years was a future glorious period preceding the second advent, an era during which the world would be converted through combined human endeavor and the effusion of the Spirit. Wars would cease, he declared, and universal righteousness and equity would prevail on earth.

Postmillennialism delays the second advent until the close of at least 1000 years. In this way another major misconception concerning this great prophecy of Rev. 20 was brought into being. This fallacy produced the inevitable reaction of the latter-day premillennial second advent message, which declared that the cataclysmic end of the age would occur at the second personal and glorious advent of Christ and the literal resurrection of the righteous dead. Later, the views of one wing of modern premillennialism has produced considerable reaction from advocates of amillennialism, a view that makes the millennium refer figuratively to the whole Christian age.

Catholic Counterinterpretations and Modern Protestantism.—The Protestant Reformers contended that the papal system was the prophesied Antichrist, portrayed under the multiple symbols of Daniel’s little horn, Paul’s man of sin, mystery of iniquity, and John’s beast, Babylon, harlot, etc. Two astute Jesuits parried with the contention that Antichrist was not a professedly Christian system spanning the Middle Ages, but a single individual; Antichrist, according to Francisco Ribera, was a Jew in the distant future, who would reign in Jerusalem, or, according to Luis de Alcazar, a pagan Roman emperor of

the past who ruled in the early centuries. Thus Roman Catholics shifted the antichrist completely out of the Middle Ages. Acceptance of either thesis would effectively counter the predominant Protestant view.

In time these counterviews came to be adopted by the great majority of Protestants, who are probably unaware of these Jesuit antecedents. Most fundamentalists have adopted Ribera's futurist contention that the Beast-Antichrist is a malevolent, atheistic tyrant who will appear and do his exploits at Jerusalem within 3 1/2 literal years at the end of the age. Thus futurism places most of the book of Revelation in the so-called end-time. On the contrary, modernists largely accepted Alcazar's preterist thesis. They designate the Beast-Antichrist as a persecuting Roman emperor far in the past, and apply the entire book of Revelation to the beginning of the Christian Era. Thus modern divided Protestantism has largely abandoned the clear Protestant Reformation witness on Antichrist for interpretations based on one or the other of these two mutually exclusive views projected by the Catholic Counter Reformation.

Expositions Involving Symbols in Revelation.—In the 19th-century Old World advent awakening and also in the New World Millerite movement, the standard historicist positions on prophecy were quite largely taken over from Reformation and post-Reformation expositors. However, there were basic differences between these two wings of resurgent premillennialism, especially on the nature of the millennial reign. The literalists gave rise to the later fundamentalist futurism, while the Millerites, from whom Seventh-day Adventists came, gave further development to the historicist position. More study had to be given by the Millerite forefathers to the book of Revelation than to Daniel, which was more fully grasped and understood. Limited concepts, inherited from the earlier Protestantism, were corrected and carried further: such as (1) the contemporary timing of the three angels of Rev. 14, and their messages; (2) the first advance beyond the general Protestant misconception of the 1000 years as a "temporal" kingdom to the view that the millennium is for the redeemed only; and (3) the view that not only Babylon, the mother in Rev. 17 and 18, but also her daughters, had errors from which separation would become necessary.

The Exposition of the Three Angels' Messages.—The specifications of the three angels' messages of Rev. 14, especially the third message in the setting of the larger section of Rev. 12 to 20, became the special area of the most intensive study and the greatest advance in understanding by the Seventh-day Adventist pioneers in the years following 1844. The seals, the trumpets and their time periods, the two witnesses, the two women (churches) of Rev. 12 and 17, had already been widely discerned in both the Old World and the New. The real significance of the second symbolic beast of Rev. 13 had been glimpsed. But in the 19th century a systematic or integrated prophetic interpretation was developed in the remnant church, an edifice for which the book of Revelation, along with Daniel, became the inspired blueprint.

Having seen the over-all setting and framework, we are now ready to trace the progressive development of the individual prophecies that make up the book of Revelation.

II. The Seven Churches Cover the Christian Era

Interest in identifying the seven churches of Rev. 2 and 3 can be traced back to the latter part of the 3d century to Victorinus, bishop of Pettau (died c. 303), the first systematic commentator on the Revelation. He apparently introduced the principle of

repetition as characteristic of the Apocalypse—that the seven seals, trumpets, and vials are not consecutive, but repetitive, each series covering the Christian Era. The seven churches, Victorinus believed, symbolized the church universal in seven phases, or seven classes of Christians. But the allocation of the respective divisions as time periods was left until later, and only gradually perceived.

Periods Progressively Identified.—Several centuries elapsed, during which the Tichonius-Augustine school of spiritualized interpretation dominated the exposition of the Apocalypse. Then gradually men began to return to the historical view of the prophetic outlines. The Venerable Bede (c. 673–735), Britain’s 8th-century theologian, church historian, and earliest known expositor of the Revelation, held that the seven churches are “figures of the whole sevenfold church,” and hinted of a historical sequence. Sardis, he thought, referred to the time of Antichrist, and Laodicea to the period of the scarcity of faith prior to the Second Advent. The *Glossa Ordinaria*, attributed to a German abbot, Walafrid Strabo (807–849), applied the sixth church epoch similarly, and Bede’s influence is seen also in Haymo, bishop of Halberstadt, also of the 9th century. An Italian bishop, Bruno of Segni (d. 1123), and a Scottish abbot, Richard of St. Victor (d. 1173), extended the vision of the seven churches from the birth of the church to the end of time.

Pierre Jean d’Olivi of southern France, leading light among the 13th-century Spirituals, believed he was living near the end of the 5th period of the seven churches that span the Christian Era. In the 11th century Berengarius, canon of the cathedral at Tours, and later head of its school, in battling transubstantiation contended that the see of Rome was “Satan’s seat,” thus possibly alluding to the state of the church typified by Pergamos. On the contrary, the literary giant of his time, Albertus Magnus of Cologne (d. 1280), mentioned the “heresy of Mohammed” as Jezebel in the Thyatira church.

Protestant Identification of Thyatira.—Although as early as the 14th century the Lollard scholar, Walter Brute, trained at Oxford, applied the Smyrna period to the ten years of violent persecution under Diocletian, the churches seem to have been little discussed in the Reformation century, perhaps because Luther saw them as the literal, ancient churches. But the seven-period view continued to be held by later writers such as the illustrious Heinrich Bullinger (1562–1607), chief pastor at Zurich; John Bale, of Ireland (1495–1563); Thomas Brightman (1562–1607), Puritan scholar and one of the fathers of English Presbyterianism; Thomas Beverly (fl. 1670–1700), Independent minister; Charles Daubuz (1673–1717), exiled Huguenot; and Theodore Crinsoz de Bionens (1690–c. 1750), Swiss theologian and Orientalist. It became common Protestant teaching that the period of the popes was the Thyatira church, during which the Roman Jezebel taught, with the remaining churches extending through the Reformation and on to the judgment. Even from the fringes of Catholicism comes the voice of Pierre Algier, French jurist and Jansenist, who declared that the “Jezebel” of the Thyatira church indicated the Jesuits.

Sardis and Philadelphia Periods Indicated.—Daniel Cramer (1568–1637), Lutheran professor, found the characteristics of the seven churches in the religious groups of his day, especially the Zwinglian and Calvinist churches. Heinrich Horch (1652–1729), Reformed theologian of Heidelberg, likewise applied Sardis to the post-Reformation church, the dead works of which must be shaken off in the Philadelphia

period. About the beginning of the 18th century we find among the German Pietists the belief that they were then living in the Philadelphian age.

Laodicea Followed by the Advent.—In the widespread British advent awakening of the early 19th century a typical list (*Morning Watch*, September, 1830) allocated the seven churches thus: (1) Ephesus, from the apostles to the persecutions of Nero; (2) Smyrna, till the accession of Constantine; (3) Pergamos, from the elevation of Constantine to the rise of the little horn at the beginning of the 1260 years; (4) Thyatira, the testimony against the papacy during the 1260 years; (5) Sardis, from the end of the 1260 years until the preparation for the coming of the Lord; (6) Philadelphia, the period of preparation, until the Lord comes; (7) Laodicea, the “only one entirely future” just before the end. There was general agreement on Thyatira as the papal apostasy period and Laodicea as the last-day condition before the second advent (for example, Joseph D’Arcy Sirr [1794–1868], Irish rector; Louis Gausson [1790–1863], Swiss Protestant theologian; and London’s Edward Irving [1792–1834]), but there were slight variations on the last three churches. Some (such as “R.H.,” in the *Christian Herald* of January, 1830) made Sardis the 16th-century Reformation and Philadelphia the spiritual emphasis of the early 19th century, in which they were then living. Gausson had Philadelphia as the Reformation. But the general pattern was now securely established. John Bayford, one of Joseph Wolff’s sponsors, declared that “the church is *now* in Laodicea,” with the final judgments impending at the second advent.

“10 Days” Generally Dated A.D. 303–313.—As early as the 14th century Walter Brute had applied the “ten days” feature of prophesied persecution in the Smyrna period to A.D. 303 to 313, the terrible persecution begun by the emperor Diocletian. This became the generally accepted interpretation. It is mentioned by various 19th-century British expositors, such as George Croly, Irish scholar; Thomas Keyworth, British Hebraist; Edward Bickersteth, secretary of the Church Missionary Society; and Thomas R. Birks, Cambridge professor. And Croly adds, “Days are in prophetic language *years*.”

Interest in North America.—Early New World expositors, like Protestant European exegetes, had connected Thyatira with the papal period, for example, Roger Williams (c. 1603–1683), cofounder of the first Baptist church in America, and Samuel Osgood (1748–1813), former Postmaster General. So there was essential unity among many prophetic exegetes on both sides of the Atlantic regarding the seven churches.

By the time of the North American second advent movement, in the fourth and fifth decades of the 19th century, the now virtually uniform position was that the seven churches extend “from Pentecost till the Day of the Lord,” to quote Adam Hood Burwell (c. 1790–1849), a missionary to Canada. Among the Millerites this interpretation of the seven churches was taken for granted rather than stated. For example, Henry Jones, Congregationalist minister, took as axiomatic seven periods, or states, of the church, with Laodicea as the now-present state. To this, Elon Galusha, Baptist pastor, agreed.

So the recognition of the seven churches was by this time progressive, consistent, and rather uniform across the centuries, including the one ten-day time period as of A.D. 303–313.

III Seven Seals Likewise Span Christian Era

Earliest Concepts Fragmentary.—Attempts at the exposition of the seals date back to the early centuries. Irenaeus of Gaul (c. 130–c. 202) merely alludes to Christ as the rider of the white horse. Tertullian (c. 160–c. 240), ecclesiastical writer of Carthage, in

passing, comments on the fifth seal as future and the sixth seal at the time of the final dissolution of earth and sky, at the end of the world. But it was Victorinus who first gave the over-all scope of the seven seals, explaining that they span the period between the first and second advents, which he of course thought a short period.

To him the first seal, the crowned rider on the white horse, symbolized Christ's church going forth on its victorious mission to the world, with Christianity triumphing over paganism. The second, the red horse, meant the coming wars. The third, the black horse, stood for famines in Antichrist's time, and the fourth, the pale horse, the coming destructions. The fifth seal pointed to the coming reward of saints and sinners. The sixth seal, with its signs, symbolized harbingers of the last events. The seventh seal introduced the everlasting rest in Christ's kingdom.

Medieval Understanding Broadened.—Andreas, Greek archbishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia about the 7th century, saw in the seals (1) the victory of the apostolic church, (2) the struggle and warfare caused by the church, (3) the backsliding of the unfaithful, (4) the plague in the time of Maximian, (5) the cry of the martyrs, (6) the time of trouble under Antichrist, and (7) the final good things of God for the blessed. In the 8th century the Venerable Bede set forth a sevenfold division of the Apocalypse. The first seal is the primitive church; the sixth, the time of antichrist; and the seventh the beginning of eternal rest. But the other four are not time periods. Seals two, three, and four are the threefold war against her by persecutors, false brethren, and heretics; the fifth seal is the glory of the victors in this war. Bede's was regarded as the standard view until the 12th century, followed by the *Glossa* of Walafrid Strabo and by the exposition of Haymo of Halberstadt.

Bruno of Segni (d. 1123) progressed to the idea that the first five seals reveal the gradual worsening of the church, with the sixth as the last tribulation under Antichrist. Then Anselm of Havelberg (d. 1158) took the next step and made the seals seven historical eras, from the primitive gospel purity to the eternal rest at last. He also attempted to show where they fitted into history. The second horse, red with martyrdom, is the period to Diocletian; the third, the church blackened by the heresy of Arius and others; the fourth, pale under the impact of hypocrisy, counterbalanced by Augustine, Bernard of Clairvaux, and others. The fifth concerns the martyrs who suffered for God; the sixth refers to the world convulsed under Antichrist. In the seventh seal the church reposes in heavenly bliss.

Influenced by Anselm, Joachim of Floris introduced his sevenfold division of the Christian Era embracing (1) the primitive church down to the death of John, (2) the pagan persecutions to Constantine, (3) the Arian controversy to Justinian, (4) the Saracens to Charlemagne, (5) the Roman clergy and monks to Joachim's time, (6) the judgment of Babylon, and (7) the final sabbath of rest. Joachim's new emphasis on historical interpretation was followed by the 13th-century Joachimites, such as Pierre Jean d'Olivi, who agreed that the first four seals represent the early hardships, the pagan persecutions, the Arian heretics, the hypocrites, but added that under the fifth seal, then in progress, the see of Rome had become the seat of the beast.

Comprehensive Coverage by Pre-Reformation Men.—Coming to pre-Reformation times, we find R. Wimbledon, a Lollard preacher, explaining the seven seals in the familiar successive periods of the early church, persecution, heresies, hypocrites, etc. In the time of Antichrist he sees, significantly, the devil's ministers hindering the preaching

of the gospel. John Purvey (d. 1428), associate and successor of Wyclif and writer of the first Protestant commentary, taught essentially the same series, as did Savonarola, reformer of Italy, martyred in 1498, who saw in the pale horse the time of lukewarmness—applicable in his own day to the Church of Rome, in which no love is left.

Amplification in Reformation Times.—In Reformation times Martin Luther applied the seals to the physical or political evils, such as wars, famines, pestilence, and martyrdoms, rather than to time periods. But Theodor Bibliander, Swiss exegete (d. 1564), understood the seals to be successive periods. And John Bale (d. 1563), saw in the fourth seal the church when the bishops sought preeminence, as when Pope Boniface III took it upon himself to be God's vicar on earth; and in the souls under the altar, in the fifth seal, he saw the martyred Waldenses and Albigenses. François Lambert, first French monk converted to Protestantism, believed that after the persecution portrayed under the seals, the 1000-year pause of Rev. 20 will follow under the last seal.

Both John Hooper (martyred, 1555), bishop of Gloucester and Worcester, and Thomas Cranmer (1489–1556), Archbishop of Canterbury, applied the fourth seal to the papal period, as did post-Reformation writers such as King James I of England and David Pareus (1548–1622), a noted Calvinist professor at Heidelberg.

Counter Reformation Introduces Futurism.—In Counter Reformation times the Jesuit Francisco Ribera, in his futurist exposition, held that the seals cover the (1) apostolic era, (2) early persecutions, (3) heresies, and (4) persecutions by Trajan. But he believed that the phenomena of the sixth seal indicated signs just preceding the second advent at the end of the age. Thus he skipped the intervening centuries. His fellow futurist, Cornelius of Lapide, Belgium (1567–1637), placed all the seals in the future. On the other hand, Luis de Alcazar, the preterist, relegated them all to the past, before the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.

Mede Applies His Strange Theory.—Joseph Mede, Cambridge professor, writing in 1627, advocated his strange concept limiting the first six seals to imperial Rome up to Diocletian and Constantine, with the trumpets as the unfolding of the seventh seal. In this system he was followed by a number of writers.

In opposition, however, others extended the seals over the whole history of the church—such as Thomas Burnet (1635–1715), English clergyman and author; Matthaeus Hofmann of Silesia (who looked for the fifth seal to end in 1747); Johann H. Alsted of Herborn (1588–1638); and Matthias Hoë von Höenegg (1580–1645), court preacher in electoral Saxony in the time of the Thirty Years' War.

Sir Isaac Newton (1642–1727), renowned Cambridge professor, had the first four seals related to civil affairs during the heathen Roman Empire, with the perversions and persecutions of the papal man of sin under the fifth seal, and with the seventh seal opening on the Day of Expiation.

Little Change in Colonial America.—In pioneer Colonial America Thomas Parker (1595–1677) placed the sixth seal along with the last trumpet and vial, the end of the 1335 years, and the last judgments upon antichrist. And a scholarly Boston layman, Samuel Hutchinson (1618–1667), believed that the seals, as well as the trumpets, were far along in their fulfillment. Dr. Benjamin Gale of Connecticut (1715–1790) believed that the seventh seal, the seventh trumpet, and the seventh vial would all “terminate at one and the same period of time, viz., with the destruction of *mystical Babylon*.”

Lisbon Quake a Fulfillment.—When the devastating Lisbon earthquake occurred in 1755, Thomas Prentice, Congregational clergyman, applied the sixth seal as well as Matt. 24:27 to this catastrophe. He called it a harbinger of the end of the world and the coming of the Lord to judgment, when the supreme fulfillment will take place.

Nineteenth-Century Advent Awakening.—Just before the 19th-century Old World advent awakening, Andrew Fuller (1754–1815), Baptist theologian of Ketteringham, England, reverted to Mede’s theory that the seventh seal continues the trumpets. But a French Dominican, Père Bernard Lambert, in 1806 considered the sixth seal the literal convulsions in heaven and earth just before the great consummation, with the half hour’s silence a brief respite before the last fearful judgments. On the contrary, James H. Frere in 1815 placed the fulfillment of the seals in the Western Empire of Rome, paralleling the seven trumpets in the Eastern Empire.

Many British writers in the early 19th-century advent awakening held that the seven seals cover the Christian Era, as did also French Judge Pierre J. Agier and the Swiss professor Louis Gausson. Henry Drummond, M.P. (1786–1860), saw in the seals the Christian church through the centuries changing from purity to apostasy, with the sixth as “the punishment of the papacy, beginning at the French Revolution,” and the seventh destroying “all Christendom.” Several believed that the sixth seal involved the French Revolution—James Leslie of Edinburgh, Matthew Habershon, English church architect, and William Anderson, Scottish Presbyterian minister. But William Cuninghame (1813), Alexander Keith of Scotland (1826), and George Croly of Ireland (1827) held the sixth seal to be yet future.

American Expositions.—A few 18th-century or early 19th-century non-Millerite American expositors—Uzal Ogden, William F. Miller, Aaron Kinne, and Ethan Smith—followed Mede in confining the first six seals to the early centuries. But Dr. Amzi Armstrong, Presbyterian educator and minister, in 1815 held the predominant view that the seals set forth the history of the church (1) from apostolic “white,” (2) through the “red” pagan persecutions, up to the time of Constantine, (3) during the “black” period of famine for the Word of God from Constantine to the barbarian invasions, (4) the “pale” period of the extinction of spiritual life until the Reformation, (5) the revival of the martyr spirit, (6) the great concussions, when the stone kingdom shall smite all earthly kingdoms, and (7) the millennial peace and rest.

Samuel M. McCorkle, a Disciples layman, declared that the seven seals take us through the introduction of Christianity, early pagan persecutions, the civil establishment of the church, consequent corruptions, ecclesiastical persecutions, the church rolled together as a scroll and removed, and finally the descent of the New Jerusalem, or the millennium.

To Adam H. Burwell in Canada the seven seals, along with the seven churches and the seven trumpets, end “in the great day of wrath, and the coming of the Son of Man.” The leaders in the Millerite movement wrote little on the seals. Their minds were engrossed with the seven trumpets, the two beasts, the two women of Rev. 12 and 17, the two witnesses, the time periods, and the millennium. They accepted as axiomatic that the seven seals covered the Christian Era. They were in accord with the best scholarship of the past.

IV. Prolific Exposition Develops on Seven Trumpets

The exposition of the trumpets spreads over fifteen centuries, beginning with Victorinus in the 3d century, and in modern times the trumpets have been treated with increasing interest, among writers from many countries and many denominations, reaching a peak by mid-19th century. Most of the expositors dealt with one or both of the time periods, that is, the “five months,” or 150 years, of the fifth trumpet, and the “hour-day-month-and-year” (the 391 or 396 years) of the sixth trumpet.

From the 8th century onward the Saracens came to be widely regarded as the power indicated by the fifth trumpet. John Foxe seems to have been the first (1587) to allocate the 150-year time period, placing it from 606 to 756. From the time of John Napier, Scottish mathematician, and George Downham, Anglican bishop, we find various attempts to time the 391 (or 396) years (of Rev. 9:15). From Heinrich Bullinger (d. 1575) onward, practically all expositors declared the Turk to be the power of the sixth trumpet.

In 1627 Joseph Mede identified the depredations of the northern barbarians on Western Rome (under Alaric, Gaiseric, Odovacar, and Attila) as the first four trumpets. A further development came under Thomas Beverley, in 1684, who first interpreted the “hour” of Rev. 9:15 as “15 days,” to be added to the 391 years. In time, this came to be viewed by many as a valid interpretation.

Thousand Years of Progressive Exposition.—In the 3d century Victorinus projected the interpretation that the seven trumpets cover the Christian Era, paralleling the churches and seals. Venerable Bede, in the 8th century, believed the first five trumpets to be in the past, with the last two still future. But the *Glossa* of 9th-century Walafrid Strabo had the last three still future.

Twelfth-century Joachim of Floris, the first to apply the important year-day principle to the “five months,” equating it with 150 years, did not attempt to locate them. He believed, however, that the trumpets covered the Christian dispensation, and that the fifth was being fulfilled in his own day. Two centuries later Walter Brute again affirmed that the “five months” equal 150 years.

Luther, like other early Reformers, was so engrossed with weightier matters that he was content to regard Mohammed and the Saracens as involved in the sixth trumpet. Heinrich Bullinger defined the sixth trumpet (or second woe) as involving the Turks. From John Napier, in 1593, the fifth and sixth trumpets were often applied to the Saracens and the Ottoman Turks. Napier also dated the 150 years as beginning about 1051, and the period of the sixth trumpet as beginning about 1300.

Cambridge-trained Thomas Brightman expounded the early trumpets of the periods following the 7th seal (from Constantine), holding the barbarian Vandals to constitute the fourth. He saw in the fifth the Saracen ravages from 630 to 780, and in the sixth the Ottoman Turks from 1300 to 1696. With this Bishop Downham agreed. From then on there was general agreement in application to the Saracens and the Turks, though variation as to the dating of the periods.

Thomas Goodwin, president of Magdalen College, Oxford, seems to have been the first (in 1654) to begin the sixth trumpet in 1453, at the fall of Constantinople, thus dating the Turkish woe from 1453 to 1849, on the basis of 396 years.

American Positions Virtually Identical.—As might be expected, Colonial American expositors taught essentially the same as the Old World interpreters. Writers between John Cotton, in 1639, and Joshua Spalding, in 1796, dealt in varying fullness with the period of the barbarian invasions as fulfilling the first four trumpets, and the

Saracens and Turks as the subjects of the symbolism of the fifth and sixth (woe) trumpets. Ephraim Huit (1644) dated the 6th from 1300 to 1695, and Increase Mather, president of Harvard, and his illustrious son Cotton Mather, dated it from about 1300 to 1696. Jonathan Edwards, Congregationalist revivalist, placed it slightly earlier, from 1296 to 1453. Samuel Osgood began the Turkish period with 1299, and dated the 150 years of the Saracens from 622–772. Joshua Spalding, pastor at Salem, Massachusetts, in 1796 published his conviction that the end of the sixth trumpet was nearing.

Little Change in Post-Reformation Exposition.—Among Old World post-Reformation interpreters, scores of writers between George Downham in 1603 and Joseph Galloway in 1798 deal with the trumpets. These included illustrious names like Joseph Mede, Thomas Goodwin, Sir Isaac Newton, William Whiston, Jonathan Edwards, and Bishop Thomas Newton. Nearly all applied these trumpets to the barbarian invasions, the Saracens, and the Turks—some reckoning the five months as 150 years, some beginning either the 391 (or 396) years from about 1300, and others ending them in connection with the fall of Constantinople in 1453.

Majority Accept 391-Year Formula.—In the early decades of the 19th century a solid phalanx of New World expositors, matching the Old World exegetes, held quite uniformly that the barbarians, Saracens, and Turks were the powers involved. The most frequent date for the 150 years of the Saracenic woe was from 612 to 762, with many of the investigators approximating these dates, as from 622 to 772, or 632 to 782. These older expositors separated the lesser period from the 391 years. But William Miller dated the 150 years from 1298 to 1448, and the 391 years from 1448 to 1839. He was followed by Josiah Litch, who in 1838 dated the 150 years from 1299 to 1449, with the 391 years following immediately, from 1449 to 1840.

By then a few were still clinging to the “396” years (based on the $365 + 30 + 1$ formula), while the majority took the 391-year position ($360 + 30 + 1$). Anglican cleric E. W. Whitaker, in 1795, appears to have been the first to project 1453–1844 as the dating for the 391 years of the sixth trumpet. A number followed his lead in subsequent decades, the majority being British expositors. Thus fifteen centuries of exposition, representing various faiths and many nationalities, and embracing men of high caliber, lie behind the teaching of the Millerites in the fourth and fifth decades of the 19th century, especially behind the calculation of Josiah Litch, first published in 1838.

Uniformity Among the Millerites.—Among the Millerites there was practically no deviation from the Litch position of the consecutive dating of the 150 years and the 391 years. The 150 years were reckoned from July 27, 1299, to 1449, followed by the 391 years from 1449 to 1840. The leading Millerite expositors prior to 1844 gave this dating.

V. Two Witnesses-Living Personages, Then Two Testaments

Enoch and Elijah the Earliest View.—The earliest concept of the two witnesses of Rev. 11 was that of two living persons—probably Enoch and Elijah—coming back to earth to testify. Tertullian (c. 160–c. 240) is understood to have made such an application, as did Hippolytus (died c. 236), likewise of the 3d century, and Ambrose of the 4th. Then most exegetes between Primasius of the 6th century and Ubertino of Casale in the 14th followed suit—still with Enoch and Elijah preaching repentance. A few variations appeared. The Benedictine Berengaud suggested “Christian ministers” as the witnesses. Joachim of Floris (12th century) conceived them to be two spiritual orders that would arise.

“3 1/2 Days” Reckoned as 3 1/2 Years.—At least a half dozen expositors, between Tichonius (c. 380) and Pierre Jean d’Olivi (d. 1298), used the year-day principle beyond the initial 70 “weeks-of-years” application of Theodoret to the 3 1/2 “days” of the witnesses.

Concept of Two Testaments Advanced.—On the other hand, 12th-century Bruno of Segni introduced a new concept—that the two witnesses, in addition to Enoch and Elijah, are spiritually the doctors of the church strengthened by the two testaments of Holy Scripture, which are the witnesses for the Lord.

Ubertino of Casale, a leader of the Spirituals, in 1305 charged Pope Boniface VIII with being the “mystic Antichrist.” Though he still saw the two witnesses as Enoch and Elijah, to be slain by the future “open Antichrist,” he saw them also spiritually as Francis and Dominic, represented by their orders, persecuted by “mystic Antichrist.” By this time the two concepts parallel each other.

Reformation Teaching on the Witnesses.—During the next two centuries, until the time of the Protestant Reformation, we find the figurative application of Enoch and Elijah (the Lollard treatise *The Lantern of Light*, c. 1400) or of the coming of Elijah (Matthias of Janow, c. 1380) to last-day preachers.

On the other hand Heinrich Bullinger looked upon the witnesses simply as the martyrs cruelly slain by the papal Antichrist. Then a commentary on Revelation (1558) attributed to Johann Funck, came out boldly with the contention that the two witnesses are the Old and New Testaments. Matthias Flacius (1520–1575), first Protestant church historian, affirmed the same, as did John Napier (1550–1617), early Scottish expositor of the Apocalypse. Napier pointed out that the term “testament” comes from Latin *testamentum*, derived from *testis*, meaning “a witness.” By now the two-testament exposition had an established place.

Counter Reformers Hold to Two Witnesses as Individuals.—In the Catholic Counter Reformation, Jesuit Bellarmine, a futurist, who built on the work of Ribera, maintained that Enoch and Elias are the two witnesses, and that the 42 months are simply a literal 3 1/2 years yet to come. On the contrary, Alcazar, the preterist, restricted the term to the early Christian witnesses of the past. The Protestant scholar Hugo Grotius (1583–1645), who followed Alcazar’s preterism, connected the 42 months of Rev. 11 with the building of the pagan temple of Jupiter in Jerusalem and the Bar Cocheba rebellion. So the conflicting views continued.

42 Months, 1260 Days.—Several time features were seen to be interrelated—the 1260 days of the prophesying of the two witnesses, the 42 months of the treading down of the Holy City, the slaying and resurrection of the witnesses in 3 1/2 days, followed by the “earthquake,” and the fall of the “tenth part” of the “city.”

Thomas Brightman (1600) interpreted the 1260 days of the witnesses as 1260 years from Constantine to about 1558—with the warring against the true church and the Scriptures beginning afresh at the Council of Trent.

In 1603 George Downham understood the 42-month period to be 1260 years, dated from Justinian or possibly Phocas. Joseph Mede equated the 1260 days of the witnesses in sackcloth with the 42 months of the treading down, the 3 1/2 times, or 1260 days, of the woman in the wilderness, and the 42 months of the beast’s domination—all denoting the 1260 years of the papacy.

These 1260 years were dated variously by numerous writers on both sides of the Atlantic: John Tillinghast (1604–1655) ends them possibly in 1656; in America John Cotton, Puritan divine (1655), in 1655; Roger Williams, apostle of liberty (1652), about that time; William Sherwin (1607–1687), about 1666; Thomas Beverley (1684), in 1697; Jacques Philipot and Pierre Jurieu, French Protestants (1685), in 1705 and 1710 or 1714.

In 1698 Drue Cressener, prebendary of the cathedral church of Ely, significantly dated the “1260 years of the Reign of the Beast” from Justinian to “a little before the year 1800.” This was a remarkable forecast. In 1681 Thomas Beverley observed that the “tenth part of the city” had not yet fallen. Drue Cressener (1698) declared the “tenth part” of the “city” to be one of the ten kingdoms “that were given to the Beast.” He understood that the killing and resurrection of the witnesses would be the “suppression and revival of the true religion,” about 1800. And in Switzerland, Theodore Crinsoz de Bionens (1729) likewise saw the tenth part of the city as one of the ten kingdoms that severs connection with the papacy.

The Tenth Part of the City as France.—Thomas Goodwin, celebrated non-conformist, in 1639 held France to be the “tenth part” of papal Christendom, or one of the ten kingdoms, which would fall in connection with the slaying of the witnesses during the 3 1/2 years. He considered the earthquake in connection with the resurrection of the two witnesses to be an internal upheaval, commotion, or revolution. Goodwin was followed by other writers who saw the tenth part of the city as one of the ten kingdoms of the papal empire, and by a growing number of writers in identifying the “tenth part” of the city as France—by John Cotton (1655) and Increase Mather (1708) in America; in France by the Huguenots, Jacques Philipot and Pierre Jurieu (1637–1713), following the revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685 (the latter declaring that the witnesses were even then lying dead in her “street”).

The Witnesses, the Earthquake, and the French Revolution.—Some time before the French Revolution several remarkable expositions of prophecy pointed to that event. In 1701 Robert Fleming, Jr., English Presbyterian pastor, predicted that the French monarchy would fall about 1794—his ending date for the 1260 years reckoned from Justinian. In 1755 David Imrie, Scottish minister, expected France to be involved in bringing judgments on the papacy about 1794. About 1755 also one of John Wesley’s associates, John Fletcher (Jean Guillaume de la Fléchère) said that thousands of Protestants in France were expecting a great revolution that would bring them relief.

When the French Revolution broke out, a number of expositors announced the fulfillment of the “earthquake” and the falling of the “tenth part” of the “city.” These included, in 1793 and 1794, William Linn, president of Queen’s College (Rutgers); Elhanan Winchester, American Universalist; Joseph Priestley, clergyman and scientist; and James Bicheno, Dissenting minister; in succeeding years other writers, like the American ministers Joshua Spalding, Joseph Lathrop, David Austin (1798), and Timothy Dwight, president of Yale (1812). Joseph Galloway, Loyalist in the American Revolution, devoted a long chapter in his 1802 commentary to the two witnesses—the Old and New Testaments, or two “sacred records”—as slain in France from 1792 to 1796, dated from the expulsion of the clergy and the establishment of atheism. Thus, almost a century prior to the French Revolution, and again in the midst of that upheaval, France’s key place as the “tenth part” of the great papal “city,” Babylon, to fall away from the support of papal Rome and end her dominance, was increasingly stressed.

During the last years of the 18th century men recognized and proclaimed the fulfillment of the predicted slaying of the witnesses, the end of the 1260 days, and the beginning of the “time of the end.”

Advent Awakening Swells the Exposition.—In the early 19th-century Old World advent awakening there was identification of France as the “tenth part” of the “city” by at least a dozen of the leading writers. To James H. Frere, for example, the two witnesses were clearly the Old and New Testaments, their death and resurrection having been fulfilled in the French Revolution from 1793 to 1797, with their exaltation following thereafter. One writer in *The Morning Watch* (1829), after identifying the two witnesses as the two Testaments, placed the 3 1/2 years from 1793 to 1797 in France. Charles D. Maitland (1813), William Cuninghame (1813), Edward Cooper (1825), and others declared that the Holy City had been trodden underfoot from 533 to 1792. (Others had 533 to 1793).

George Croly (1780–1860), Irish expositor, declared that the slaying of the two witnesses referred to actions against the Old and New Testaments in connection with the “abjuration of religion” by the French government and people. And this all came as predicted, he said, at the close of the 1260 years, the “earthquake” occurring in 1793, France being the “tenth part” of the “city” and the Revolution the “political earthquake.” John Hooper, Anglican rector, similarly, in 1830, placed the slaying of the witnesses (the Old and New Testaments) under the “infidel ascendancy,” believing that the events of 1792 marked the termination of this period—the 1260 years.

Pre-Millerite Expositors Concur.—In America a number of pre-Millerite expositors declared, between approximately 1800 and 1840, that the French Revolution indicated the “earthquake,” or France as the “tenth part” of the “city.” Amzi Armstrong, Presbyterian minister and educator, wrote in 1814–15 that the 3 1/2 days, or years, were from 1792 to 1796; A. L. Crandall, a clergyman of West Troy, New York, writing in 1841, placed them from 1793 to 1797.

Unity of View Among Millerites.—Among the Millerites there was a striking degree of unity on the view that the 42 months of the beast were from 538 to 1798, that the two witnesses were the Old and New Testaments, France the “tenth part” of the papal “city,” and the “earthquake” of Rev. 11 as the French Revolution. Those who dated the 3 1/2 years of the slaying of the Bible witnesses placed them from 1792 or 1793 to 1796. When we come to the Seventh-day Adventist pioneers, between 1844 and 1860, there was practically no change in interpretation—simply a reaffirmation of what had been held in the Millerite movement, and what was already current in the antecedent Old World advent awakening on the witnesses, the slaying, the “tenth part” of the “city,” the “earthquake,” and the ending of the 1260 years.

VI. Interpretation of Revelation 12 Established Early

Pattern Set in 3d Century.—The series of related symbols in Rev. 12—the “woman,” “child,” “dragon,” “wilderness,” and “a time, and times, and half a time”—began to be expounded as early as the 3d century. Hippolytus and Victorinus taught that the “woman” of Rev. 12 symbolizes the church; the “man child” is Christ. The church flees from Rome’s persecution. Methodius (c. 260–c. 311) of Tyre believed the “child” represented the saints.

The pattern is found repeatedly between late 4th-century Tichonius and 13th-century Olivi. In the 8th century Bede called the “woman” of Rev. 12 the church and the

“dragon” the devil, as did Berengaud (probably late 9th century), and 12th-century Richard of St. Victor, also Bruno of Segni, except that he regarded the child as the “sons of the church.” The noted abbot Bernard of Clairvaux (d. 1153) varied the interpretation by declaring the “woman” to be the virgin Mary, as did Albertus Magnus, 13th-century scholastic, who likewise saw in these symbols a graphic portrayal of the church in her struggle against Satan.

Joachim Introduces 1260 Years for Days.—The celebrated 12th-century abbot Joachim of Floris reaffirmed the standard exposition of the “woman” of Rev. 12 as the whole church, but in particular the hermits and the virgins. He agreed that the “man child” is Christ, with the “dragon” as the devil. But at this point Joachim introduced a fundamentally new advance in the interpretation of this chapter—that the 1260 “days” as the period of the woman’s flight symbolize 1260 years, “a day without doubt being accepted for a year and a thousand two hundred and sixty days for the same number of years.” This led him to anticipate the new Age of the Spirit soon after his own time. The year-day principle had already been applied to the 3 1/2 days of ch. 11 by Tichonius and others, and to the 1290, 1335, and 2300 days of Daniel by several medieval Jewish interpreters.

Joachimite Pierre Jean d’Olivi agreed with Joachim on the 1260 days as years, which he expected to end shortly after his day, though he also applied the period as literal days to the persecution by antichrist. So, at the close of the medieval period the “woman” was commonly accepted as the pure church, and the “child” most often as Christ. But none saw the 3 1/2 times as prophetic years until Joachim, about 1190, applied the 1260 days to 1260 years—a marked advance.

Woman Persecuted by Papal Antichrist.—Two centuries after Joachim, the Reformation expositor John Purvey, Wyclif’s collaborator, declared the “woman” to be Christ’s church and the 1260 year-days the time of the papal Antichrist’s persecution. This was a standard position of the Lollards. Another Lollard scholar, Walter Brute, in 1393 advanced the thought that in the early centuries the “woman” (church) of Rev. 12 had taken refuge during the 1260 years in Britain, where the true faith had been maintained.

In Reformation times, from Martin Luther on, those who commented on the “woman” usually designated her as the true, or pure, church, instead of simply the church universal, and the “dragon” as Satan. The 1260 prophetic days were recognized as years, and there was growing concern over their timing. For example, Georg Nigrinus (1530–1602) suggested 441–1701; Johann Funck (1518–1566) 261–1521; and Michael Servetus (1509–1553), 325–1585.

Jesuit Counterinterpretations Injected.—In the counterinterpretations of the Catholic Counter Reformation, Francisco Ribera, champion of futurism, saw the “woman” as the church fleeing from persecution to the last 3 1/2 years of literal time (during the reign of an individual antichrist), and the “dragon” as Satan. Luis de Alcazar, in his preterist view, projected the theory that the “woman” of Rev. 12 is none other than the apostolic church bringing forth the Roman Church.

Timing of 1260 Years Determined.—Little change of interpretation appears in post-Reformation times. More than a score of expositors, between George Downham in 1603 and Christian G. Thube of Germany in 1796, held the now standard Protestant view of

the “woman” church, the Roman “dragon,” and the Christ “child.” Virtually all Protestants considered the 1260 prophetic days, or 3 1/2 times, as 1260 literal years.

In timing, men varied in the placement of the 1260 years. John Tillinghast (1654) reckoned the period from 396 to 1656; David Pareus (1618) favored 606–1866; John Napier (1593) suggested 316–1576; Thomas Beverley (1688), 437–1697; Drue Cressener (1689), from Justinian to about the year 1800. When the French Revolution broke forth, many connected it with the end of the 1260 days. James Bicheno (1793) held the approximate date of 529–1789. But as soon as Pope Pius VI had been taken captive by French arms in 1798, the dating of 538–1798 was advanced as the true timing by many, such as Britain’s Edward King and Richard Valpy.

The French Huguenots, persecuted like the Waldenses before them, also called themselves, after Louis XIV revoked the Edict of Nantes in 1685, the “church in the wilderness.” To them, the period in the wilderness was the church in obscurity.

America Included in “Wilderness.”—A number of expositors in the Colonial and early national periods in America commented on Rev. 12. From John Cotton to Timothy Dwight there was little variation on the symbols. Cotton said the woman in the wilderness was the Waldenses. Roger Williams referred to “the sustentation of the woman, Rev. 12” in “Popish times and places.”

To Samuel Langdon the woman in the wilderness was the church in its “purest state,” the two “women” (of Rev. 12; 17) clearly symbolizing the two contrasting churches. Samuel Sherwood, Princeton teacher (1776), and Samuel Gatchel, Congregationalist deacon (1781), held that the woman fled from the papal Antichrist to the American wilderness.

Harmony Among Old World Heralds.—A score of able expositors in the Old World advent awakening of the early 19th century, with whom the second advent was the primary emphasis, explained the “woman” as the true church, or true believers, in contrast with the dominant apostate organization. The 1260 years were now generally regarded as having ended, the majority beginning them from Justinian, who gave legal sanction to the pope’s unprecedented powers, ending them in 1792 or 1793 (Edward B. Elliott favored 538–1798). Some, however, preferred 606–1866.

Andrew Fuller, secretary of the Baptist Missionary Society, believed that the “wilderness” into which the true church fled from Antichrist’s corruption and persecution included America. George Croly interpreted the “flood” as persecution under the Crusades and the Inquisition. To Louis Gaussen the true church of Rev. 12 included the Vaudois of Piedmont, the Paulicians, the Lollards, the Moravians, the Huguenots, and even the Jansenists.

Nineteenth-Century Americans Adhere to Pattern.—As the 19th century dawns in North America many non-Millerite writers from various denominations comment on Rev. 12 without any essential deviation from the standard pattern on the woman, child, and dragon.

There was marked uniformity of exposition among the Millerites on the “true church” woman, the Christ “child,” and the Roman “dragon”; and the 1260 years were, practically without exception, given as 538–1798. The pattern had become quite standard with expositors. From these, Seventh-day Adventists have varied little.

VII. Second “Beast” Has Deferred Identification

Eighteen Centuries of Exposition.—From the time of Irenaeus of Gaul the two symbolic “beasts” of Rev. 13 begin, and continue over the centuries, to receive an amazing amount of expositional attention. In the early church we find the views that the two beasts symbolized, according to Irenaeus, the Antichrist and his “false prophet” or, according to Victorinus, a Roman and the Antichrist. The ten horns were the coming divisions of the Roman Empire. The 42 months were as yet understood as literal time, and the name connected with the number 666 (of v. 18) might be *Lateinos* or *Teitan*, or *Diclux*. Rome was believed to be involved.

Tichonius and Augustine in the 5th century introduced a mystical concept of the *corpus diaboli* of the “ungodly city” (or community) of the world, with the false prophet as Antichrist. But the earlier position, with Antichrist and his false prophet for the two beasts, was held by Greek Archbishop Andreas of Caesarea, about 632, and 9th-century Berengaud and others of the period. The Venerable Bede taught that the second beast was variously defined as apostles or preachers of Antichrist, or false brethren. One or two wondered whether the beast might be an infidel, a heathen, or a Saracen. The Waldenses, however, plainly declared the beast to be the Roman Church. And Joachim of Floris looked upon the first beast of Rev. 13 as a combination of the four beasts of Daniel—Jews, pagans, heretics, and Saracens. The second beast he believed to be the sect of the false prophets, involving the Antichrist. The name for the number 666 was, he thought, not yet revealed.

Innocent III, seeking to divert the growing charges involving the papacy, contended that Mohammed was the man of sin, with the number 666 standing for the years of the duration of his kingdom, which period, he asserted, would soon expire.

Beast Identified as Papal Antichrist.—We find new interpretations among the Joachimites, such as Pierre Jean d’Olivi, with the two beasts as the secular rulers and the false prelates, and the image of the beast as a pseudo pope; Ubertino of Casale, with Boniface VIII and Benedict XI as the beasts, and 666 meaning “Benedict.” Then pre-Reformation writers Matthias of Janow (d. 1394), Wyclif of Bohemia, John Purvey, the Lollard leader, and John Hus of Bohemia (1369–1415) held that the first beast was clearly the papal Antichrist. The number 666 was attached by some to the pope.

Rome Indicated, With Two Concepts.—In the 16th-century Reformation more than a score of expositors discoursed on one or both of the beasts, the majority designating papal Rome as the first beast (Andreas Osiander, Alphonsus Conradus, George Joye, John Bale, and others). A minority had pagan or imperial Rome, with the second beast as papal Rome (Martin Luther, Johann Funck, John Foxe, and others). With both groups the two-horned beast was generally another aspect of the papal Antichrist, or Antichrist’s preachers—the papal hierarchy or clergy.

The 42 prophetic months were regarded as 1260 years. The 666 was variously interpreted; Luther, Bullinger, and some others regarded the number as indicating years, but Melancthon, Flacius, Foxe, Napier, and Pareus, and others held that the 666 stood for a name, such as the Hebrew *Romith* (*Romiith*), or the Greek *Lateinos* (in Latin *Latinus*, equivalent to *Romanus*). The “mark,” some thought, represented subservience, worship, or allegiance to the beast. But these positions were somewhat tentative.

Majority Hold Papacy as First Beast.—Old World exegetes of the 17th and 18th centuries reveal the same division in interpretation, a majority taking the papacy to be the first beast. But in both groups we find the second beast as papal Rome—or simply a second aspect of Rome, though some like Sir Isaac Newton, thought it might be the Greek Church; John Wesley (1703–1791) thought it would appear from Asia; Johann Bengel (1687–1752) believed it might represent Jesuitism.

Attempts were now increasingly made to place the dating of the 42 months—such as 396–1656, 437–1697, or perhaps 454–1714, 538–1798, or even 606–1866. Of numerous Latin, Greek and Hebrew names for “666,” most of which have been applied to the papacy, *Lateinos* is the most frequently selected; *Vicarius Filii Dei* is introduced once, by the German professor Andreas Helwig.

Protestantism as Second Beast.—Thomas Goodwin (1600–1680) was probably the first to suggest that as the first beast symbolized the papacy, so the image evidently typified the Protestant image of the papacy in the Reformed churches. This interpretation was later to grow in favor. In Colonial and early national periods more than thirty writers in America, from every walk of life, published expositions on Rev. 13, from John Cotton in 1639 to Timothy Dwight about 1800, presenting the papacy, or the Catholic Church, as the first beast. The second beast appears as another phase of the papacy, with the two horns as possibly civil and religious tyranny. But the second beast is applied to Protestantism, by Isaac Backus, Baptist historian, with the two horns standing for church censure and temporal punishments. John Bacon, Congregational clergyman, held a somewhat similar view.

Emphasis Persists in 19th Century.—In the early 19th century there were numerous interpreters of Rev. 13 in the Old World and the New. Still there was division—some clinging to the civil or pagan Roman first beast. Nearly all had the papacy, the hierarchy, the priesthood, the Jesuits, or the Inquisition as the second beast, though a few brought in infidel France (as Joseph Galloway and Samuel Toovey); a few, Protestantism or Protestant sectarianism (as Samuel M. McCorkle and Elias Smith in America), and isolated voices suggested the Greek church or France, but there was little on the “two horns” or the “mark.” A favorite dating for the 1260 years was from 533 to 1792/3; other datings were 529–1789, 534–1794, 537–1797, 587–1847, or 606–1866, to name the most important ones.

In North America, among non-Millerite students of prophecy from 1800 to 1844, some considered civil, or secular, Rome the first beast; the great majority had it the papacy. Some saw the seven heads as seven forms of Roman government, or the ten horns as the ten divisions of the empire.

666—Years or a Name?—In the Old World little was said on the 666, though three expositors saw the 666 as years (133 B.C.-A.D. 533; 533–1198; another ended them in 1843). In America only two computed the 666 as years. Those who took this feature to stand for a name usually chose *Lateinos*. Two ministers, Presbyterian Amzi Armstrong and Episcopalian Richard Shimeall, added *Vicarius Filii Dei* as an alternative possibility.

Millerites Unified on 538–1798.—William Miller held the position that the first beast was civil, or pagan, Rome, but his associates came to believe it to be the papacy. The Millerites were agreed on the seven heads as forms of Roman government, on the ten horns as the ten kingdoms or divisions of Rome’s empire, and on 538–1798 as the 1260 years. Aside from Miller, scarcely anyone discussed the second beast—three wondered

whether it was France. The few references to the “666” followed Miller in making them years, from 158 B.C. to A.D. 508.

VIII. Angelic Messengers Have Last-Day Application

Early Exposition Sketchy and Scattered.—The three symbolic angels of Rev. 14:6–12 and their messages had relatively little place in early exposition.

In the 3d century Victorinus thought that the first and second angels might be the latter-day Elias and Jeremiah preceding the second advent. Berengaud about the 9th century saw them as groups of preachers, the third constituting those who protest against antichrist. In the 12th century Joachim of Floris regarded them as possibly future, preachers at the end of the second age. The Joachimite Olivi refers to the second angel as announcing the fall of Babylon, the “carnal church.” Wyclif’s successor, John Purvey, declared that the first angel represented a preacher of the evangelical doctrine proclaimed in Purvey’s own time; that the second angel identifies “Babylon” as Rome, spiritual and temporal; that the third angel’s message is directed against the Antichrist-beast.

Wyclif, Hus, and Luther Suggested.—Some Reformers saw the three angelic messengers as preachers against the papal Antichrist during the Reformation. Thomas Brightman identified them as (1) Wyclif and his Lollard preachers, (2) Hus and Jerome, with their associates, and (3) Luther. A Calvinist professor at Heidelberg, David Pareus (d. 1622), held (1) Wyclif, Hus, Jerome, etc., (2) Luther, (3) all evangelical preachers since Luther. Johannes Gerhard, professor at Jena (d. 1637), saw Luther as the first angel. But Heinrich Horch, noted as court chaplain and professor at Herborn, considered the three angels still future. Drue Cressener, proctor at Cambridge, in 1689 connected the messages with the Reformation, at the beginning of the final ruin of the Roman Church. The Massachusetts justice Paul Dudley (d. 1751) said the angelic messages had not resulted in bringing all God’s children out of (papal) Babylon. Johann Bengel of Denkendorf (d. 1752) thought the first and second angels might be the pietists Arndt and Spener, with the third yet to come.

Early 19th Century.—At the threshold of the 19th century these three angelic messages received increased attention and emphasis. In 1812 Congregationalist Joseph Lathrop connected the first angel with the missionary and Bible Society movement just getting under way, as also did Amzi Armstrong of New Jersey (1815). Among Bible commentators, Thomas Scott (d. 1821) and a few others suggested that the angelic messengers might symbolize the Waldenses, Hussites, and Reformers. But later commentators and annotators like Adam Clarke and Joseph Priestly, also the *American Columbian Family Bible* and the *English Cottage Bible*, suggested that the first angel stood for Bible and missionary societies, and many connected the second or third with warnings against the papacy.

In the Old World advent awakening of the early decades of the 19th century a number of men between 1813 and 1844 declared the first angel, with the “everlasting gospel” and the announcement of the judgment, to be already flying in their day. These included William Cuninghame, James H. Frere, Joshua Brooks, John Bayford, Lewis Way, Henry Drummond, John Fry, Edward Cooper, George Croly, John Hooper, William Thorp, and Joseph Baylee. Edward N. Hoare, editor of *The Christian Herald*, reiterated the same—the cry, he said, should resound “from hill to hill, throughout the nations of Europe.” There was a general opinion that certain missionary, Bible, and prophetic societies were already proclaiming the message of the angels, and that the second angel and the third

angel were soon to follow, forewarning the world of Babylon's impending doom and heralding the approaching advent.

First Two Angels Seen in Millerite Movement.—In America, at the same time, similar convictions were expressed by such non-Millerite writers as Congregational-Presbyterian Ethan Smith (1833) and Seventh Day Baptist Elias Burdick (1843). In the Millerite movement those who dealt with the three angels followed the lead of William Miller, who believed that the first angel was a symbol of the Advent Movement and its message. The picture of the flying angel, with the text, was published widely as an epitome and authorization of their message to men. When the churches responded to the Millerites' second-advent proclamations with expulsion of Adventist members and ministers, Charles Fitch began, in the summer of 1843, to add to the judgment-hour message the call of the second angel, "Babylon is fallen," and, from a similar passage (Rev. 18:4), "Come out of her, my people." This message reached its climax during the "seventh month" movement of the summer and autumn of 1844.

But, strangely enough, the third angel was scarcely mentioned by the thousands who were giving what they believed was Heaven's "judgment hour" message to earth for that time. Not until after 1844 did the role of the third angel dawn upon the consciousness of the group of Sabbatarian Adventists. Thus the threefold message of the heavenly trio received its climatic place, during the decades that followed, in the Seventh-day Adventist movement.

IX. "Mark of Beast" Connected With Papal Power and Authority

Wyclifites Connect "Mark" With Papal Antichrist.—Christian scholars have periodically pondered the meaning of the coming "mark of the beast." Apparently the first to do so was Cyprian (c. 200–258), bishop of Carthage. He connected it with the coming Antichrist. It was discussed with increasing frequency from the time of Wyclif's followers, such as Walter Brute, who definitely connected it with the *papal* Antichrist sitting in the "temple of God," and John Purvey, who interpreted the mark in the hand as works conformed to the Antichrist.

Reformers Expound "Mark" as Subservience to Papacy.—We find, among Luther's contemporaries, the papal beast's "mark" equated with subservience to the papacy (Andreas Osiander) or enforced papal worship and ceremonies, effected through its canons, decretals, and ceremonies (Nicolaus von Amsdorf).

Other Reformers interpreted the mark as the papacy's excommunicating power (taught by Zwingli's successor, Heinrich Bullinger), allegiance to the beast and practicing the "works of the beast" (the British bishop, Nicholas Ridley, martyred, 1555), and the "invisible profession" of obedience to papal power (John Napier of Scotland, the great mathematician).

"Mark" and "Seal" Considered Opposites.—In post-Reformation times the German pietist Johann Andreas Lucius (1625–1686), of Dresden, interpreted the mark of the beast as the confession of the Roman religion. The distinguished English scientist Sir Isaac Newton interestingly placed the seal of God and the "mark" of the beast as contrasting opposites. He did not define them, but connected them, in timing, with the final day of judgment. Other 18th-century writers saw the "mark" as the profession of faith of the corrupt Roman Church (the Dutch theologian Campegius Vitringa) and as the papacy's use of oppressive force to impose its "mark" of dominance (de la Fléchère, Wesley's associate).

Colonial Americans Have Similar Concepts.—The same general exegesis prevailed in Colonial America. The “mark of the beast” was seen to involve: receiving orders from the Church of Rome (John Cotton); yielding to the “Popes Lawes” by subscribing to his supremacy or by “some open token of communion with him” (Congregationalist layman, Edward Holyoke, 1658); or subservience to and union with the papacy (Paul Dudley, Massachusetts jurist, 1731).

Early 19th Century Britain.—Andrew Fuller observed that the mark of the papal beast was “opposed” to “the seal of God.” James Haldane Stewart, participant in the Albury Park Prophetic Conference of 1826, wrote of the tremendous judgments destined to fall in Catholic countries upon those who have the mark of the beast. In the United States, Robert Reid (d. 1844), Reformed Presbyterian minister of Erie, Pennsylvania, looked upon the mark of the beast as papal Rome’s church-state, the token of authority. He thought that this would apply to any church showing the same characteristics.

Such was the preparatory background for the fuller understanding to come under the heralding of the third angel’s message. While it was not previously applied by anyone to the Sabbath issue, it was associated consistently with submission to papal authority and practices, some recognizing it as bearing on the law of the papacy in contrast with the law of God.

X. Last of Seven Vials Associated With Last Days

In Category of Last Things.—Tertullian and Victorinus (3d century) placed the vials in the “last times.” The illustrated commentary of Beatus (8th century) and the Bamberg commentary on the Apocalypse (c. 1000) pictured the angels pouring out the vials of the seven last plagues. The Venerable Bede of Britain (c. 716) touched them lightly.

Historical Application.—Joachim of Floris (12th century) saw the vials as covering the Christian Era, parallel with the seals and the trumpets, the fifth vial being poured out on the false ones among the clergy and conventuals, as God’s seat becomes the seat of the beast and Antichrist reigns. The sixth plague falls upon the Roman State, or Empire, or New Babylon, and the seventh cleanses the spiritual church. Olivi likewise puts the sixth vial along with the sixth seal and the sixth trumpet. In the pre-Reformation period John Purvey made the angels the preachers against Antichrist, with the vials containing damnation for the followers of Antichrist. Then Luther’s foreword to the Apocalypse assigns the seven vials to the Reformation. Many others in the 17th and 18th centuries similarly defined the seven vials as judgments already falling on the papacy or the Catholic Church, centering in the Reformation, but culminating in Armageddon in the last times. These included Thomas Brightman, David Pareus, Joseph Mede (to whom the drying up of the Euphratean flood was the coming exhaustion of the Turkish Empire), William Sherwin, and Robert Fleming, Jr.

Daniel Cramer, of Stettin, believed the plagues to be punishments upon papal Christianity, but spread over many centuries, as did Pierre Jurieu and Charles Daubuz, who began them respectively in the 10th and the 7th centuries, and Johann Petri (1774), who thought the seventh vial would be poured out about 1847, followed by the millennium. Some, like Edward King (1798), saw the vials in process of fulfillment during the French Revolution.

Variant Views Among American Exegetes.—In early Colonial America many believed the plagues to be already in progress in their day, with the fifth and sixth falling

upon papal Rome. These included John Cotton, Samuel Sewall (1697), Samuel Hopkins (1793), Congregationalist theologian, Joshua Spalding (1796), and Joseph Lathrop. Most of these held the fifth was poured out during the Reformation and that they were now under the sixth or seventh. But Yale's president, Timothy Dwight, taught that the fifth vial was involved in the French Revolution, with the sixth then due. There was considerable variation of opinion as to whether the sixth referred to the papacy or to Turkey. On the other hand, Elhanan Winchester, writing in 1794, believed that all seven vials were still future.

Last Vials Thought Still Future.—Johann Bengel (1740) considered the outpouring of the vials still future in his day. So did Baptist scholar John Gill (d. 1771). This was now a trend seen in several commentaries, such as those of Matthew Henry and Thomas Newton, also the D'Oyly and Mant annotated Bible and Brown's *Self-Interpreting Bible*.

Plagues Believed in Progress—In the early 19th-century Old World advent awakening a number of writers between 1800 and 1844 dealt with the vials, and thought the plagues were falling in their time. Many, like Faber, Cuninghame, Gauntlett, and Frere, thought the vials had begun to be poured out during the French Revolution. For most, the sixth involved the Turks. Some held that the fifth was in progress, others the sixth.

Among non-Millerite American prophetic expositors between 1798 and 1844, many deal with the vials, holding the plagues to be in progress. Some begin them at the Reformation, others with, or during, the French Revolution. As in England, the fifth involves the papacy, and the sixth most often the Turks.

Millerites Sustain Prevalent View.—In the Millerite movement there was no particular or general emphasis on the seven vials. Miller believed that they began to be poured out in Reformation times, with the sixth vial, the drying up of the Turks, impending, and the seventh at the end. Henry Dana Ward, Episcopalian clergyman of New York City, understood the last of the vials to come in connection with the seventh trump, at the second advent. Philemon R. Russell had the last vial poured out on the papal beast, with the sixth vial on the Euphratean Turk. One of the earlier Millerite charts likewise began them with the Reformation, with the fifth falling on the seat of the beast through the French Revolution, the sixth against the Turk, and the seventh against the world.

Among the Sabbatarian Adventists who formulated their doctrines between 1847 and 1855, the position was held that the seven last plagues are all future and begin upon probation's close, with the fifth plague upon the papacy, the sixth seeing the nations gathered to Armageddon, and the seventh involving the final events of earth's history.

XI. "Babylon" of Revelation 17 Uniformly Applied to Rome

Rome, Pagan and Papal.—The several symbols of Rev. 17—picturing the gaudy woman, Babylon riding the seven-headed, ten-horned beast, or seated on the seven hills—were expounded in the early church. Irenaeus of Gaul (died c. 202) equated the beast with the beast of Rev. 13, and the horns were considered the same as those of Daniel's fourth beast, that is, the predicted ten divisions of Rome. Tertullian, Victorinus, and others expressed the general view that Babylon meant pagan Rome.

In contrast with Augustine, the Donatist Tichonius applied "Babylon" to the secularized Roman Church and its worldly bishops. Seventh-century Greek Andreas, archbishop of Caesarea, saw Rome riding Antichrist as the beast. The Venerable Bede, in

the 8th century wrote of the harlot, the multitude of the lost, sitting on the beast, whose heads are the kings of the world, and whose eighth head is Antichrist reigning at the end of the age. Berengaud (probably late 9th century) identifies the harlot as all evildoers, but especially pagan Rome; he makes Antichrist the beast's seventh head.

Joachim of Floris identifies the Babylon as Rome, that is, all the reprobate of the Christian empire. The seven heads of the scarlet beast he declared to be successive persecuting kingdoms, from the Jewish persecutors down to the Saracens. He warned that it was to the sons of Babylon within the Roman Church and the Roman Empire that the doom of Roman Christendom would belong. Peirre Jean d'Olivi incurred official censure for declaring the Babylon set forth in the book of Revelation to represent the carnal, corrupted Church of Rome.

Medieval Application to Papacy.—The Albigenses, and also the Waldenses, designated the Church of Rome as the harlot of the Apocalypse.

During the Renaissance, several Catholics applied Rev. 17 to the Roman Church. In his *Divine Comedy* Dante (d. 1321) portrayed the corrupt Roman Church as the shameless woman; so did Michael of Cesena, general of the Grey friars, and Johannes de Rupescissa, a Minorite friar under Clement VI, whereas Francesco Petrarch, crowned poet laureate (Rome, 1341), identified the harlot as the papacy at Avignon.

Pre-Reformation leaders like Walter Brute and John Purvey, Lollard scholars, reiterated the position that Babylon on the waters parallels, in time, the woman in the wilderness. And Savonarola, afterward burned at the stake for his prophetic faith, in denouncing the spiritual unfaithfulness of the Roman Church boldly called her the great harlot of the Apocalypse.

Keynote of Reformation Exposition.—In Reformation times Martin Luther in 1520 and a number of his followers identified the papacy or the Roman Church with the harlot, Babylon. She is repeatedly pictured by contemporary artists as wearing the identifying triple crown upon her head. Writers identifying the woman Babylon with the Roman Church included Matthias Flacius, and Heinrich Bullinger (1557), also the British expositors William Tyndale, Nicholas Ridley, Thomas Cranmer, John Bale (1545), John Jewel (d. 1571), and John Napier. Bale and Napier saw the pope as the seventh head, or form, of the Roman government on the beast.

Counter Reformers Restrict Application to Pagan Rome.—In the Roman Catholic Counter Reformation this universal testimony was decried and denied by Luis de Alcazar, who insisted that Babylon is restricted to the *pagan* Rome of the past, and by Francisco Ribera, who saw it as both pagan Rome and also Christian Rome of the time of the future Antichrist, after it will have fallen away from the popes. Viegas and Lapidé agreed with Ribera.

Uniformly Sustained in Post-Reformation Times.—After the Reformation numerous well-known expositors maintained the historic Protestant position on Rev. 17, including Gerhard, Cramer, Spener, and Bengel in Germany; Pacard, Jurieu, and Philipot in France; and in Britain, King James I, Mede, Sherwin, Cressener, Isaac Newton, Whiston, Thomas Newton, Wesley, and others.

There is a paralleling list of expositors in Colonial and early national America holding essentially the same positions—from John Cotton and Roger Williams down to Timothy Dwight, president of Yale.

Concurrence in 19th Century.—Equally striking is the uniformity of opinion among interpreters in the early 19th-century Old World advent awakening on the Roman Babylon. Most often the seventh head of the beast is papal. Even the Jesuit Lacunza insisted that the apocalyptic harlot is papal Rome, and not, as Catholic commentators generally maintained, Rome of the distant past or future.

In America between 1798 and 1844 among both non-Millerite and Millerite expositors the positions of centuries of Protestant exposition continued to be stressed. But a new concept—that Babylon now includes apostasy in the Protestant daughters—came into prominence. The Sabbatarian Adventists generally agreed with the Millerites, though generally holding the eighth head of the beast as papal Rome. But the newer points had been anticipated by earlier writers. The harmony of the centuries is impressive.

Protestants Retain Spirit of Babylon.—Not until post-Reformation times did expositors begin to suggest that the papal “Babylon” of Rev. 17, being a “mother,” had daughters bearing the same family name. Expressing the belief that certain Protestant bodies, or state-church union in general, had retained some of the characteristics and errors of the papacy, they began occasionally to allude to them in terms of Antichrist or “Babylon.” Among these were well-known nonconformists like Robert Browne, Henry Barrowe, John Milton, and in Colonial North America the freedom-loving Roger Williams and Baptist historian Isaac Backus.

And Samuel Hopkins, Congregationalist theologian, declared that few Protestant churches or individuals had come entirely out of Rome, “the *mother* of all the false doctrines, superstition, infidelity, and abominable practices in the Protestant world.”

Nineteenth-Century Witness.—In the 19th century various Anglican and nonconformist leaders spoke of the Catholic “mother” having Protestant “daughters” that bore some of the maternal characteristics. Hugh M’Neile said that Babylon embraces “the whole of the anti-Christian systems of the western empire.” David Simpson, an Angelican, held that Protestant churches of “whatever denomination” which partake of the same spirit as Rome or “have instituted doctrines and ceremonies inimical to the pure and unadulterated Gospel of Christ,” must share her fate; and expressed fear that the Church of England must be considered the “eldest daughter.” In North America in the early 19th century many wrote strongly on the Protestant “daughters.” These included Elias Smith of the Christian Connection, Lorenzo Dow of the Methodists, John Thomas of the Christadelphians, Samuel M. McCorkle of the Disciples, and Isaac T. Hinton of the Baptists.

Millerites Sound Call to “Come Out.”—As the Millerites encountered increasing ecclesiastical opposition to their doctrine on the second advent, many, both clergy and laymen, were deprived of their church membership. By mid-1843 Fitch began to sound the call, “Come out of Babylon.” Miller was reluctant, but by September, 1844, Joshua V. Himes, who stood next to Miller, sounded the call to separate. The Millerites felt increasingly that they must “come out” of Protestant daughter churches, which were tinctured with the tainted doctrines of Babylon and were definitely rejecting God’s great judgment-hour message that they believed Millerism was proclaiming.

This was the background of the belief, held by those Millerites who became the first Seventh-day Adventists, that the Millerite movement had sounded the second angel’s message of Rev. 14.

XII. The Second Advent, the Millennium, and the Eternal State

Early-Church Premillennialism.—The earliest Ante-Nicene writers who expounded the 1000 years of Rev. 20 were premillennialists, that is, they held that the second coming of Christ would be accompanied by the resurrection of the righteous, and followed by the millennium, with the second, or general, resurrection at its close. The early chiliasts, as they were called, believed that the resurrected righteous would reign with Christ on this earth during the millennium, and that the final transformation of all the righteous to the “angelic,” or eternal, state would not take place until the end of the millennium. This earthly kingdom had its capital, some said (Justin Martyr, Irenaeus), in Jerusalem rebuilt, or in a divinely built Holy City, with the descent of the New Jerusalem at the close of the millennium. Tertullian, however, had the New Jerusalem “let down from heaven” during the millennium, with the eternity of heaven after the conflagration of the earth.

The chiliasts applied the kingdom prophecies of the Old Testament literally to the millennium; they envisioned incredible fertility and plenty, victory and dominion over the nations, and prosperity. But they were not like the modern “literalists” of the futurist school of interpretation. The early premillennialists held that the saints who were persecuted by Antichrist before the second advent and the saints who were to reign in the millennial kingdom after the advent were not the literal Jews, but the Christians—the church, the true Israel, the heirs of the kingdom promises. Neither were they what we today call futurists, for they saw prophecy fulfilling in history, and the future developments, such as the Antichrist, as unfolding already in their time and continuing to the end.

Augustinianism Supplants Premillennialism.—But simple belief in the millennium as following the second advent, widely held in the early church, became more and more colored by the pagan and Jewish concepts attached to it—the fantastic and materialistic elements. Eventually this brought millennialism into disrepute in the face of the rising tendency to allegorism (influenced by Origen, Dionysius of Alexandria, and others), and the popularization, enrichment, and exaltation of the church by Constantine. The premillennial postulate, which involved divine intervention and a catastrophic end of the age, was set aside as the expanding Catholic Church came to be looked upon as the prophesied kingdom of God, the New Jerusalem.

Augustine (5th century) standardized for more than a thousand years the view that the millennium had begun at the first advent, with the first resurrection spiritual, Satan already bound, and the kingdom of the saints embodying the church spreading out over the earth. This was the medieval understanding, and indeed the basis for the concept of the religio-political dominion of the papacy.

In the 12th century Joachim, who shifted the accent again to the historical interpretation of the Apocalypse, did not deny the Augustinian millennium, yet he advanced the view that Satan’s binding, in the complete sense, was still future, at the beginning of the expected “Age of the Spirit.” This was the beginning of a growing rift.

Early Reformers Cling to Augustinian Millennium.—Luther opposed Rome’s claim to be the New Jerusalem by declaring that it was Babylon. But most of the early Reformers in all lands still held to a modified form of the Augustinian view of the thousand years. A few writers, such as Francois Lambert, Michael Servetus, Sebastian Castellio of Basel, put the thousand years in the future, but there was as yet no general shift to this view.

Mede—Restorer of Premillennialism.—The reinstatement of premillennialism in Protestantism was largely accomplished and popularized by Joseph Mede, of Cambridge, who maintained that the second advent will destroy Antichrist and inaugurate the millennium bounded by the two resurrections. Mede spoke of the New Jerusalem as on the earth during the millennium, but he believed that the saints would be in heaven after the end of it. The Fifth Monarchy men generally stood on the platform of a future millennium on earth, though some of them, in their efforts to inaugurate it, tended to a postmillennialist rather than a premillennialist view.

Other writers, such as Thomas Goodwin, William Sherwin, Thomas Burnet, Johann Piscator, and Robert Fleming, Jr., all championed the premillennial view.

Revolutionary Postmillennial View Projected.—Daniel Whitby, Anglican rector of Salisbury, England, introduced in 1703 the revolutionary thesis of *postmillennialism*, in which the national establishment of the Jews and the overthrow of the pope and the Turk, the conversion of the world, which he denominated the “first resurrection,” would introduce a universal reign of righteousness, peace, and victory for a thousand years *before* the second advent.

In this theory Whitby was followed by the Dutch professor Campegius Vitringa, and others, though Bishop Thomas Newton, John Gill, Georg Hermann Giblehr, Joseph Galloway, and many others in the 18th century stood in direct opposition. But postmillennialism swept over Protestantism—particularly the growing rationalistic wing—and appeared in standard commentaries like those of Matthew Henry, Thomas Scott, and Adam Clarke.

Colonial America Predominantly Premillennial.—In Colonial North America at least one early writer, Thomas Parker, held to a modified form of the Augustinian theory of the millennium. Otherwise the revived premillennialist view, with its literal resurrection and advent, was standard. Jonathan Edwards, in 1774, accepted Whitby’s postmillennial postulate, and was followed by Joseph Bellamy (1758) and Samuel Hopkins (1793). By the early 19th century postmillennialism was the predominant view in the churches, and then came the growing protest of a revived and militant premillennialism.

Early 19th-Century Premillennialism.—In Europe, at the dawn of the 19th century, many expositors began to re-examine the doctrine of the premillennial second advent. Among the first were two Catholics—Pere Bernard Lambert of France and the exiled Chilean Jesuit Manuel de Lacunza of Spain and Italy. These two writers, though retaining their Catholic futurism, abandoned the Augustinian millennium, holding that the millennial kingdom would be a personal reign of Christ on earth, and was not to come until the second advent and the destruction of the churchly Antichrist (which one interpreted as the last-day popes, the other as the spirit of apostasy in the church).

The wide circulation of Irving’s English translation of Lacunza strongly influenced some writers in the British advent awakening. In this movement various individuals, societies, conferences, and periodicals were united on the personal advent of Christ as inaugurating the millennium, as against the utopian expectation of the postmillennialists, and most of them were “historicists,” and held the standard Protestant view of the papal Antichrist. Interpretation varied, however, on the prophetic dates and the events leading to the end. Many looked to 1843, 1844, or 1847 as the end of the 2300 days, which some considered to be the beginning of the millennium; many expected the millennium to

begin about 1866. There was variation as to whether the earth was to be renewed at the beginning of the millennium or at its end; whether the heavenly Jerusalem was to descend as the millennial capital or only in the eternal state; whether the saints would reign on earth or in heaven, with an earthly kingdom existing at the same time. Most of them believed that the Jews were to be converted and restored to their land either before or during the millennium.

In the attack on the postmillennialist “spiritualizing” they laid great stress on “literalism,” and in the 1830’s an increasing number began to hold futurist views. This began in the Albury conferences (1826–1830), in which attention was directed to the futurism of Lacunza and Maitland (the expositor whose future-antichrist views were put to good use by Newman in the Oxford movement). It was developed further in the Irvingite revelations, and in Darby’s teachings at the Powerscourt conferences (1830 and onward), though adopted by few at first. This new futurism was a return to the early church chiliasm of a type that was tintured with Jewish and pagan ideas of a literal, earthly kingdom; but it became a new view in which zeal for literalism carried futurism to an extreme and in a direction unheard of in the early church. It was not, however, until decades later that interdenominational premillennialism came to be largely identified with the elaborated Darbyite system of futurism, which divides the second advent into the rapture and the coming in glory; detaches the 70th week and other prophecies from their context by the space of the whole Christian age; separates the believing Jew from the church and the church from the covenant, the promises, and the prophecies; sets law at variance with grace; and deflects large sections of the New Testament away from the church.

But in the 1840’s most premillennialists were historicists, and the “Judaizing” aspect of the literalistic chiliasm did not prevent the American Millerites from regarding the literalists as allies in the contest with postmillennialism. Yet the basic difference between the “Millerites” (including some united with them who did not agree with Miller on the expected date of the second advent) and the literalists is evident in two main Millerite principles: (1) Millerites denied the literalism that required the millennial kingdom to fulfill all the Old Testament prophecies to the Jews, holding that Jew and Gentile, without distinction, are heirs to the prophecies only as Christians. (2) They denied the “temporal” nature of the millennial kingdom; that is, they believed that the second advent was to bring the fiery renovation of the earth and the transformation of the saints to immortality, so that the only millennial reign would be that of the saints, the first stage of the eternal state, which would be merely interrupted after a thousand years by the resurrection of the unsaved to receive their final retribution. This was, in general, the view held by the various Adventist bodies that developed out of the Millerite movement of 1844.

The Seventh-day Adventist pioneers retained much of the Millerite view, but they put the renewal of the earth at the end of the millennium and placed the saints in heaven during that period, assisting in the work of judgment, after which the Holy City would descend to the earth to remain for eternity.

Such is the record of millennialism and its heritage across the centuries. And such is the legacy inherited from the worldwide second advent awakening of the early 19th century.

In Conclusion.—Obviously, this discussion of the history of prophetic interpretation is brief—all too brief to do full justice to the subject. It has not been possible to turn aside

to consider those basic principles of interpretation that must serve as the criterion of the worth of the variant views of the Apocalypse that have been held by different expositors through the centuries. Nevertheless, the simple recital of those views, which reveals an ever-enlarging understanding of the meaning of the apocalyptic symbols of the Revelation, can prove of help in the interpretation of this last book of the Bible.

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- JURIEU, PIERRE. *The Accomplishment of the Scripture Prophecies, or the Approaching Deliverance of the Church*. Translated from the new French edition. London: [n.n.], 1687. France designated as “tenth part” of papal city.
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- NAPIER, JOHN. *A Plaine Discovery of the Whole Revelation of Saint Iohn: Set Downe in Two Treatises*. Edinburgh: R. Walde-grave, 1593. First Scottish exposition of Revelation; makes wide application of year-day principle.
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- TYNDALE, WILLIAM. [Works.] Vol. 1: *Doctrinal Treatises*, [etc.]; vol. 2: *Expositions and Notes*, [etc.]; vol. 3: *An Answer to Sir Thomas More's Dialogue*, [etc.] Edited for the Parker Society by Henry Walter. Cambridge: The University Press, 1848–50. Emphasizes papacy as Babylon and Antichrist.
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